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LECTURES

ON

EDUCATION.

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BY HORACE MANN,

SECRETARY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF EDUCATION.

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TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

GEORGE N. BRIGGS,

GOVERNOR

OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,

AND *ex officio*

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION,

AND TO

THE OTHER MEMBERS OF SAID BOARD,

THIS VOLUME,

PREPARED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

The Act creating the Massachusetts Board of Education was passed April 20, 1837. In June following the Board was organized, and its Secretary chosen. The duties of the Secretary, as expressed in the Act, are, to "collect information of the actual condition and efficiency of the Common Schools, and other means of popular education; and to diffuse as widely as possible, throughout every part of the Commonwealth, information of the most approved and successful methods of arranging the studies, and conducting the education of the young, to the end, that all children in this Commonwealth, who depend upon Common Schools for instruction, may have the best education which those schools can be made to impart.

The Board, immediately after its organization, issued an "Address to the Public," inviting the friends of education to assemble in convention, in their respective counties, in the ensuing autumn; and the Secretary was requested to be present at those conventions, both for the purpose of obtaining information in regard to the condition of the schools, and of explaining to the public what were supposed to be the leading motives and objects of the Legislature in creating the Board.

The author of the following Lectures was a member of the Legislature when the act establishing the Board was passed; and he was intimately acquainted with the general views of its projectors and advocates. At that time, however, the idea

never entered his mind that he should be even a candidate for the Secretaryship; but when the Board was organized, and the station was offered him, he was induced to accept it;—not so much from any supposed fitness for the office, as from the congeniality of its duties with all his tastes and predilections, and because he thought that whatever of industry, or of capacity for usefulness, he might possess, could be exerted more beneficially to his fellow-men in this situation than in any other. On accepting the appointment, therefore, it became his duty to meet the county conventions, which were held throughout the State, in the autumn of 1837; and the first of the following lectures was prepared for those occasions. Its object was to sketch a rapid outline of deficiencies to be supplied, and of objects to be pursued, in relation to the Common School system of Massachusetts.

In the session of 1838, the Legislature provided that a Common School convention should be held, each year, in each county of the Commonwealth, and that the Secretary should be present at every convention. This law continued in force until the year 1842, when it was repealed. During the first five years, therefore, after the establishment of the Board, a Common School convention was annually held in each county in the Commonwealth;—and in some of the large counties two or more such conventions were held. The Secretary made his annual circuit through the State, and was present at them all; and the first five of the following lectures were respectively delivered before the annual conventions. The lecture on "District School Libraries" was prepared in view of the great deficiency of books in our towns, suitable for the reading of children; and was delivered before Teachers' Associations, Lyceums, &c., in different parts of the State. In

the year 1839, a number of the friends of education, in Boston, instituted a course of lectures for the female teachers in the city, and the lecture on "School Punishments" was delivered as one of that course.

On almost all the occasions above referred to, a copy of the lecture delivered was requested for the press; but the inadequacy of the views presented, when compared with the magnitude and grandeur of the subject discussed, always induced the author, (except in regard to the first lecture, which was printed in 1840, in order to make known, more generally, the objects which the Board had in view,) to decline a compliance with the request. In the month of May last, however, the Board of Education, by a special and unanimous vote, requested him to prepare a volume of his Lectures on Education for the press, and to this request he has now acceded.

In preparing this volume, the author was led to doubt whether he should retain those portions of the lectures which contained special and direct allusions to the times and circumstances in which they were delivered; or whether, by omitting all reference to temporary and passing events, he should publish only those parts in which an attempt was made to discuss broad and general principles, or to enlist parental, patriotic, and religious motives in behalf of the cause. He has been induced to adopt the first part of the alternative, both because it presents the lectures as they were delivered, and because it gives an aspect of practical reform rather than of theoretic speculation to the work.

The author begs leave to add, that, as the lectures were designed for popular and promiscuous audiences, and pertained to a cause in which but very little general interest was felt, he was constrained not only to confine himself to popular

topics, but also to treat them, as far as he was able, in a popular manner. The more didactic expositions of the merits of the great cause of Education, and some of the relations which that cause holds to the interests of civilization and human progress he has endeavored to set forth in his Annual Reports; while his more detailed and specific views, in regard to modes and processes of instruction and training, may be found in the volumes of the Common School Journal. Each one of these three channels of communication with the public, he has endeavored to use for the exposition of a particular class of the views and motives, belonging to the comprehensive subject of education.

Justice to himself compels the author to add another remark, although of an unpleasant character. Some of the following lectures have been delivered not only before different audiences in Massachusetts, but in other States; and, in several instances, the author has seen, not only illustrations and clauses, but whole sentences taken bodily from the lectures, and transferred to works subsequently published. Should cases of this kind be noticed by the reader, he is requested to compare dates before deciding the question of plagiarism.

Boston, March, 1845.

LECTURE I.

MEANS AND OBJECTS OF COMMON SCHOOL EDUCATION.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:

IN pursuance of notice, contained in a circular letter, lately addressed to the school committees and friends of Education, in this county, I now appear before you, as the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. That Board was constituted by an Act of the Legislature, passed April 20, 1837. It consists of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth, for the time being,—who are members *ex officiis*,—and of eight other gentlemen, appointed by the Executive, with the advice and consent of the Council. The object of the Board is, by extensive correspondence, by personal interviews, by the development and discussion of principles, to collect such information, on the great subject of Education, as now lies scattered, buried and dormant; and after digesting, and, as far as possible, systematizing and perfecting it, to send it forth again to the extremest borders of the State;—so that all improvements which are local, may be enlarged into universal; that what is now transitory and evanescent, may be established in permanency; and that correct views, on this all-important subject, may be multiplied by the number of minds capable of understanding them.

To accomplish the object of their creation, however, the Board are clothed with no power, either restraining or directory. If they know of better modes of education, they have no authority to enforce their adoption. Nor have they any funds at their disposal. Even the services of the members are gratuitously rendered. Without authority, then, to command, and without money to remunerate or reward, their only resources, the only sinews of their strength, are, their power of appealing to an enlightened community, to rally for the promotion of its dearest interests.

Unless, therefore, the friends of Education, in different parts of the State, shall proffer their cordial and strenuous coöperation, it is obvious, that the great purposes, for which the Board was constituted, can never be accomplished. Some persons, indeed, have suggested, that the Secretary of the Board should visit the schools, individually, and impart such counsel and encouragement as he might be able to do;—not reflecting that such is their number and the shortness of the time during which they are kept, that, if he were to allow himself but one day for each school, to make specific examinations and to give detailed instructions, it would occupy something more than sixteen years to complete the circuit;—while the period, between the ages of four and sixteen, during which our children usually attend school, is but twelve years; so that, before the Secretary could come round upon his track again, one entire generation of scholars would have passed away, and one third of another. At his quickest speed, he would lose sight of one quarter of all the children in the State. The Board, therefore, have no voice, they have no organ, by which they can make themselves heard, in the distant villages and hamlets of this land, where

those juvenile habits are now forming, where those processes of thought and feeling are, now, to-day, maturing, which, some twenty or thirty years hence, will find an arm, and become resistless might, and will uphold, or rend asunder, our social fabric. The Board may,—I trust they will,—be able to collect light and to radiate it; but upon the people, *upon the people*, will still rest the great and inspiring duty of prescribing to the next generation what their fortunes shall be, by determining in what manner they shall be educated. For it is the ancestors of a people, who prepare and predetermine all the great events in that people's history;—their posterity only collect and read them. No just judge will ever decide upon the moral responsibility of an individual, without first ascertaining what kind of parents he had;—nor will any just historian ever decide upon the honor or the infamy of a people, without placing the character of its ancestors in the judgment-balance. If the system of national instruction, devised and commenced by Charlemagne, had been continued, it would have changed the history of the French people. Such an event as the French Revolution never would have happened with free schools; any more than the American Revolution would have happened without them. The mobs, the riots, the burnings, the lynchings, perpetrated by the *men* of the present day, are perpetrated, because of their vicious or defective education, when children. We see, and feel, the havoc and the ravage of their tiger-passions, now, when they are full grown; but it was years ago that they were whelped and suckled. And so, too, if we are derelict from our duty, in this matter, our children, in their turn, will suffer. If we permit the vulture's eggs to be incubated and hatched, it will then be too late to take care of the lambs.

Some eulogize our system of Popular Education, as though worthy to be universally admired and imitated. Others pronounce it circumscribed in its action, and feeble, even where it acts. Let us waste no time in composing this strife. If good, let us improve it; if bad, let us reform it. It is of human institutions, as of men,—not any one is so good that it cannot be made better; nor so bad, that it may not become worse. Our system of education is not to be compared with those of other states or countries, merely to determine whether it may be a little more or a little less perfect than they; but it is to be contrasted with our highest ideas of perfection itself, and then the pain of the contrast to be assuaged, by improving it, forthwith and continually. The love of excellence looks ever upward towards a higher standard; it is unimproving pride and arrogance only, that are satisfied with being superior to a lower. No community should rest contented with being superior to other communities, while it is inferior to its own capabilities. And such are the beneficent ordinations of Providence, that the very thought of improving is the germination of improvement.

The science and the art of Education, like every thing human, depend upon culture, for advancement. And they would be more cultivated, if the rewards for attention, and the penalties for neglect, were better understood. When effects follow causes,—quick as thunder, lightning,—even infants and idiots learn to beware; or they act, to enjoy. They have a glimmer of reason, sufficient, in such cases, for admonition, or impulse. Now, in this world, the entire succession of events, which fills time and makes up life, is nothing but causes and effects. These causes and effects are bound and linked together by an adamantine law. And the Deity has given us

power over the effects, by giving us power over the causes. This power consists in a knowledge of the connection established between causes and effects,—enabling us to foresee the future consequences of present conduct. If you show to me a handful of perfect seeds, I *know*, that, with appropriate culture, those seeds will produce a growth after their kind; whether it be of pulse, which is ripened for human use in a month, or of oaks, whose lifetime is centuries. So, in some of the actions of men, consequences follow conduct with a lock-step; in others, the effects of youthful actions first burst forth as from a subterranean current, in advanced life. In those great relations which subsist between different generations,—between ancestors and posterity,—effects are usually separated from their causes, by long intervals of time. The pulsations of a nation's heart are to be counted, not by seconds, but by years. Now, it is in this class of cases, where there are long intervals lying between our conduct and its consequences; where one generation sows, and another generation reaps;—it is in this class of cases, that the greatest and most sorrowful of human errors originate. Yet, even for these, a benevolent Creator has supplied us with an antidote. He has given us the faculty of reason, whose especial office and function it is, to discover the connection between causes and effects; and thereby to enable us so to regulate the causes of to-day, as to predestinate the effects of to-morrow. In the eye of reason, causes and effects exist in proximity,—in juxtaposition. They lie side by side, whatever length of time, or distance of space, comes in between them. If I am guilty of an act or a neglect, to-day, which will certainly cause the infliction of a wrong, it matters not whether that wrong happens, on the other side of the globe, or in the next century. Whenever or wherever it happens,

it is mine; it belongs to me; my conscience owns it, and no sophistry can give me absolution. Who would think of acquitting an incendiary, because the train which he had laid and lighted, first circuited the globe before it reached and consumed his neighbor's dwelling? From the nature of the case, in education, the effects are widely separated from the causes. They happen so long afterwards, that the reason of the community loses sight of the connection between them. It does not bring the cause and the effect together, and lay them, and look at them, side by side.

If, instead of twenty-one *years*, the course of Nature allowed but twenty-one *days*, to rear an infant to the full stature of manhood, and to sow in his bosom, the seeds of unbounded happiness or of unspeakable misery,—I suppose, in that case, the merchant would abandon his bargains, and the farmer would leave the in-gathering of his harvest, and even the drunkard would hie homeward from the midst of his revel, and *that* twenty-one days would be spent, without much sleep, and with many prayers. And yet, it cannot be denied, that the consequences of a vicious education, inflicted upon a child, are now precisely the same as they would be, if, at the end of twenty-one days after an infant's birth, his tongue were already roughened with oaths and blasphemy; or he were seen skulking through society, obtaining credit upon false pretences, or with rolls of counterfeit bills in his pocket; or were already expiating his offences in the bondage and infamy of a prison. And the consequences of a virtuous education, at the end of twenty-one years, are now precisely the same as they would be, if, at the end of twenty-one days after his birth, the infant had risen from his cradle into the majestic form of manhood, and were possessed of all those qualities and attributes,

which a being created in the image of God *ought to have ;*—with a power of fifty years of beneficent labor compacted into his frame ;—with nerves of sympathy, reaching out from his own heart and twining around the heart of society, so that the great social wants of men should be a part of his consciousness ;—and with a mind able to perceive what is right, prompt to defend it, or, if need be, to die for it. It ought to be understood, that none of these consequences become any the less certain, because they are more remote. It ought to be universally understood and intimately felt, that, in regard to children, all precept and example; all kindness and harshness; all rebuke and commendation; all forms, indeed, of direct or indirect education, affect mental growth, just as dew, and sun, and shower, or untimely frost, affect vegetable growth. Their influences are integrated and made one with the soul. They enter into spiritual combination with it, never afterwards to be wholly decompounded. They are like the daily food eaten by wild game,—so pungent and saporific in its nature, that it flavors every fibre of their flesh, and colors every bone in their body. Indeed, so pervading and enduring is the effect of education upon the youthful soul, that it may well be compared to a certain species of writing-ink, whose color, at first, is scarcely perceptible, but which penetrates deeper and grows blacker by age, until, if you consume the scroll over a coal-fire, the character will still be legible in the cinders. It ought to be understood and felt, that, however it may be in a social or jurisprudential sense, it is nevertheless true, in the most solemn and dread-inspiring sense, that, by an irrepealable law of Nature, the iniquities of the fathers are still visited upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation. Nor do the children suffer for the iniquities only, of their parents; they suf-

fer for their neglect and even for their ignorance. Hence, I have always admired that law of the Icelanders, by which, when a minor child commits an offence, the courts first make judicial inquiry, whether his parents have given him a good education; and, if it be proved they have not, the child is acquitted and the parents are punished. In both the old Colonies of Plymouth, and of Massachusetts Bay, if a child, over sixteen, and under twenty-one years of age, committed a certain capital offence against father or mother, he was allowed to arrest judgment of death upon himself, by showing that his parents, in the language of the law, "had been very unchristianly negligent in his education."

How, then, are the purposes of education to be accomplished? However other worlds may be, this world of ours is evidently constructed on the plan of producing ends by using means. Even the Deity, with his Omniscience and his Omnipotence, carries forward our system, by processes so minute, and movements so subtile, as generally to elude our keenest inspection. He might speak all the harvests of the earth, and all the races of animals and of men, into full-formed existence, at a word; and yet the tree is elaborated from the kernel, and the wing from the chrysalis, by a series of processes, which occupies years, and sometimes centuries, for its completion. Education, more than any thing else, demands not only a scientific acquaintance with mental laws, but the nicest art in the detail and the application of means, for its successful prosecution; because influences, imperceptible in childhood, work out more and more broadly into beauty or deformity, in after-life. No unskilful hand should ever play upon a harp, where the tones are left, forever, in the strings.

In the first place, the best methods should be

well ascertained; in the second, they should be universally diffused. In this Commonwealth, there are about three thousand Public Schools, in all of which the rudiments of knowledge are taught. These schools, at the present time, are so many distinct, independent communities; each being governed by its own habits, traditions, and local customs. There is no common, superintending power over them; there is no bond of brotherhood or family between them. They are strangers and aliens to each other. The teachers are, as it were, imbedded, each in his own school district; and they are yet to be excavated and brought together, and to be established, each as a polished pillar of a holy temple. As the system is now administered, if any improvement in principles or modes of teaching is discovered by talent or accident, in one school,—instead of being published to the world, it dies with the discoverer. No means exist for multiplying new truths, or even for preserving old ones. A gentleman, filling one of the highest civil offices in this Commonwealth,—a resident in one of the oldest counties and in one of the largest towns in the State,—a sincere friend of the cause of education,—recently put into my hands a printed report, drawn up by a clergyman of high repute, which described, as was supposed, an important improvement in relation to our Common Schools, and earnestly enjoined its general adoption; when it happened to be within my own knowledge, that the supposed new discovery had been in successful operation for sixteen years, in a town but little more than sixteen miles distant. Now, in other things, we act otherwise. If a manufacturer discovers a new combination of wheels, or a new mode of applying water or steam-power, by which stock can be economized, or the value of fabrics enhanced ten per cent., the information flies over

the country at once; the old machinery is discarded, the new is substituted. Nay, it is difficult for an inventor to preserve the secret of his invention, until he can secure it by letters-patent. Our mechanics seem to possess a sort of keen, greyhound faculty, by which they can scent an improvement afar off. They will sometimes go, in disguise, to the inventor, and offer themselves as workmen; and instances have been known of their breaking into his workshop, by night, and purloining the invention. And hence that progress in the mechanic arts, which has given a name to the age in which we live. and made it a common wonder. Improvements in useful, and often in useless, arts, command solid prices,—twenty, fifty, or even a hundred thousand dollars,—while improvements in education, in the means of obtaining new guaranties for the permanence of all we hold dear, and for making our children and our children's children wiser and happier,—these are scarcely topics of conversation or inquiry. Do we not need, then, some new and living institution, some animate organization, which shall at least embody and diffuse all that is now known on this subject, and thereby save, every year, hundreds of children from being sacrificed to experiments which have been a hundred times exploded?

Before noticing some particulars, in which a common channel for receiving and for disseminating information, may subserve the prosperity of our Common Schools, allow me to premise, that there is one rule, which, in all places, and in all forms of education, should be held as primary, paramount, and, as far as possible, exclusive. Acquirement and pleasure should go hand in hand. They should never part company. The pleasure of acquiring should be the incitement to acquire. A child is wholly incapable of appreciating the ulti-

mate value or uses of knowledge. In its early beginnings, the motive of general, future utility will be urged in vain. Tell an abecedarian, as an inducement to learn his letters, of the sublimities of poetry and eloquence, that may be wrought out of the alphabet; and to him it is not so good as moonshine. Let me ask any man, whether he ever had, when a child, any just conception of the uses, to which he is now, as a man, daily applying his knowledge. How vain is it, then, to urge upon a child, as a motive to study, that which he cannot possibly understand! Nor is the motive of fear preferable. Fear is one of the most debasing and dementalizing of all the passions. The sentiment of fear was given us, that it might be roused into action, by whatever should be shunned, scorned, abhorred. The emotion should never be associated with what is to be desired, toiled for, and loved. If a child appetizes his books, then, lesson-getting is free labor. If he revolts at them, then, it is slave-labor. Less is done, and the little is not so well done. Nature has implanted a feeling of curiosity in the breast of every child, as if to make herself certain of his activity and progress. The desire of learning alternates with the desire of food;—the mental with the bodily appetite. The former is even more craving and exigent, in its nature, than the latter, and acts longer without satiety. Men sit with folded arms, even while they are surrounded by objects of which they know nothing. Who ever saw that done by a child? But we cloy, disgust, half-extirpate, this appetite for knowledge, and then deny its existence. Mark a child, when a clear, well-defined, vivid conception seizes it. The whole nervous tissue vibrates. Every muscle leaps. Every joint plays. The face becomes auroral. The spirit flashes through the body, like lightning through a cloud. Tell a

child the simplest story, which is adapted to his present state of mental advancement, and therefore intelligible,—and he will forget sleep, leave food untasted, nor would he be enticed from hearing it, though you should give him for playthings, shining fragments broken off from the sun. Observe the blind, and the deaf and dumb. So strong is their inborn desire for knowledge,—such are the amazing attractive forces of their minds for it,—that, although those natural inlets, the eye and the ear, are closed, yet they will draw it inward, through the solid walls and encasements of the body. If the eye be curtained with darkness, it will enter through the ear. If the ear be closed in silence, it will ascend along the nerves of touch. Every new idea, that enters into the presence of the sovereign mind, carries offerings of delight with it, to make its coming welcome. Indeed, our Maker created us in blank ignorance, for the very purpose of giving us the boundless, endless pleasure of learning new things; and the true path for the human intellect leads onward and upward from ignorance towards omniscience,—ascending by an infinity of steps, each novel and delightful.

The voice of Nature, therefore, forbids the infliction of annoyance, discomfort, pain, upon a child, while engaged in study. If he actually suffers from position, or heat, or cold, or fear, not only is a portion of the energy of his mind withdrawn from his lesson,—all of which should be concentrated upon it; but, at that undiscriminating age, the pain blends itself with the study, makes part of the remembrance of it, and thus curiosity and the love of learning are deadened, or turned away towards vicious objects. This is the philosophy of children's hating study. We insulate them by fear; we touch them with non-conductors; and then, because they emit no spark,

we gravely aver that they are non-electric bodies. If possible, pleasure should be made to flow like a sweet atmosphere around the early learner, and pain be kept beyond the association of ideas. You cannot open blossoms with a northeast storm. The buds of the hardiest plants will wait for the genial influences of the sun, though they perish, while waiting.

The first practical application of these truths, in relation to our Common Schools, is to Schoolhouse Architecture,—a subject so little regarded, yet so vitally important. The construction of schoolhouses involves, not the love of study and proficiency, only, but health and length of life. I have the testimony of many eminent physicians to this fact. They assure me that it is within their own personal knowledge, that there is, annually, loss of life, destruction of health, and such anatomical distortion as renders life hardly worth possessing, growing out of the bad construction of our schoolhouses. Nor is this evil confined to a few of them, only. It is a very general calamity. I have seen many schoolhouses, in central districts of rich and populous towns, where each seat connected with a desk, consisted only of an upright post or pedestal, jutting up out of the floor, the upper end of which was only about eight or ten inches square, without side-arms or backboard; and some of them so high that the feet of the children in vain sought after the floor. They were beyond soundings. Yet, on the hard top of these stumps, the masters and misses of the school must balance themselves, as well as they can, for six hours in a day. All attempts to preserve silence in such a house are not only vain, but cruel. Nothing but absolute empalement could keep a live child still, on such a seat; and you would hardly think him worth living, if it could. The pupils will resort to every possible bodily

evolution for relief; and, after all, though they may *change the place, they keep the pain.* I have good reasons for remembering one of another class of schoolhouses, which the scientific would probably call the *sixth* order of architecture,—the wicker-work order, summer-houses for winter residence,—where there never was a severely cold day, without the ink's freezing in the pens of the scholars while they were writing; and the teacher was literally obliged to compromise between the sufferings of those who were exposed to the cold of the windows and those exposed to the heat of the fire, by not raising the thermometer of the latter above ninety degrees, until that of the former fell below thirty. A part of the children suffered the Arctic cold of Captains Ross and Parry, and a part, the torrid heat of the Landers, without, in either case, winning the honors of a discoverer. It was an excellent place for the teacher to illustrate one of the facts in geography; for five steps would have carried him through the five zones. Just before my present circuit, I passed a schoolhouse, the roof of which, on one side, was trough-like; and down towards the eaves there was a large hole; so that the whole operated like a tunnel to catch all the rain and pour it into the schoolroom. At first, I did not know but it might be some apparatus designed to explain the Deluge. I called and inquired of the mistress, if she and her little ones were not sometimes drowned out. She said she should be, only that the floor leaked as badly as the roof, and drained off the water. And yet a healthful, comfortable schoolhouse can be erected as cheaply as one, which, judging from its construction, you would say, had been dedicated to the evil genius of deformity and suffering.

There is another evil in the construction of our schoolhouses, whose *immediate* consequences are

not so bad, though their *remote* ones are indefinitely worse. No fact is now better established, than that a man cannot live, without a supply of about a gallon of fresh air, every minute; nor enjoy good health, indeed, without much more. The common air, as is now well known, is mainly composed of two ingredients, one only of which can sustain life. The action of the lungs upon the vital portion of the air, changes its very nature, converting it from a life-sustaining to a life-destroying element. As we inhale a portion of the atmosphere, it is healthful;—the same portion, as we exhale it, is poisonous. Hence, ventilation in rooms, especially where large numbers are collected, is a condition of health and life. Privation admits of no excuse. To deprive a child of comfortable clothes, or wholesome food, or fuel, may sometimes, possibly, be palliated. These cost money, and often draw hardly upon the scanty resources of the poor. But what shall we say of stinting and starving a child, in regard to this prime necessary of life, fresh air?—of holding his mouth, as it were, lest he should obtain a sufficiency of that vital element, which God, in His munificence, has poured out, a hundred miles deep, all around the globe? Of productions, reared or transported by human toil, there may be a dearth. At any rate, frugality in such things is commendable. But to put a child on short allowances out of this sky-full of air, is enough to make a miser weep. It is as absurd, as it would have been for Noah, while the torrents of rain were still descending, to have put his family upon short allowances of water. This vast quantity of air was given us to supersede the necessity of ever using it at second-hand. Heaven has ordained this matter with adorable wisdom. That very portion of the air which we turn into poison, by respiring it, becomes the aliment of vegeta-

tion. What is death to us, is life to all verdure and flowerage. And again, vegetation rejects the ingredient which is life to us. Thus the equilibrium is forever restored; or rather, it is never destroyed. In this perpetual circuit, the atmosphere is forever renovated, and made the sustainer of life, both for the animal and vegetable worlds.

A simple contrivance for ventilating the schoolroom, unattended with any perceptible expense, would rescue children from this fatal, though unseen evil. It is an indisputable fact, that, for years past, far more attention has been paid, in this respect, to the construction of jails and prisons, than to that of schoolhouses. Yet, why should we treat our felons better than our children? I have observed in all our cities and populous towns, that, wherever stables have been recently built, provision has been made for their ventilation. This is encouraging, for I hope the children's turn will come, when gentlemen shall have taken care of their horses. I implore physicians to act upon this evil. Let it be removed, extirpated, cut off, surgically.

I cannot here stop to give even an index of the advantages of an agreeable site for a schoolhouse; of attractive, external appearance; of internal finish, neatness, and adaptation; nor of the still more important subject of having two rooms for all large schools,—both on the same floor, or one over the other,—so as to allow a separation of the large from the small scholars, for the purpose of placing the latter, at least, under the care of a female teacher. Each of these topics, and especially the last, is worthy of a separate essay. Allow me, however, to remark, in passing, that I regard it as one of the clearest ordinances of nature, that woman is the appointed guide and guardian of children of a tender age. And she

does not forego, but, in the eye of prophetic vision, she anticipates and makes her own, all the immortal honors of the academy, the forum, and the senate, when she lays their deep foundations, by training up children in the way they should go.

A great mischief,—I use the word *mischief*, because it implies a certain degree of wickedness, —a great mischief is suffered in the diversity and multiplicity of our school books. Not more than twenty or thirty different kinds of books, exclusive of a school library, are needed in our Common Schools; and yet, though I should not dare state the fact, if I had not personally sought out the information from most authentic sources, there are now, in actual use in the schools of this State, more than three hundred different kinds of books; and, in the markets of this and the neighboring States, seeking for our adoption, I know not how many hundreds more. The standards, in spelling, pronunciation, and writing; in rules of grammar and in processes in arithmetic, are as various as the books. Correct language, in one place, is provincialism in another. While we agree in regarding the confusion of Babel as a judgment, we unite in confounding it more, as though it were a blessing. But is not uniformity on these subjects desirable? Are there not some of these books, to which all good judges, on comparison, would award the preference? Could they not be afforded much cheaper for the great market which uniformity would open; thus furnishing better books at lower prices? And why not teach children aright, the first time? It is much harder to unlearn than to learn. Why go through three processes instead of one, by first learning, then unlearning, and then learning, again? This mischief grew out of the immense profits formerly realized from the manufacture of school books. There seems never to have been any difficulty in

procuring reams of recommendations, because patrons have acted under no responsibility. An edition once published must be sold; for the date has become almost as important in school books, as in almanacs. All manner of devices are daily used to displace the old books, and to foist in new ones. The compiler has a cousin in the town of A, who will decry the old and recommend the new; or a literary gentleman in the city of B has just published some book on a different subject, and is willing to exchange recommendations, even; or the author has a mechanical friend, in a neighboring town, who has just patented some new tool, and who will recommend the author's book, if the author will recommend his tool! Publishers often employ agents to hawk their books about the country; and I have known several instances where such a pedlar,—or picaroon,—has taken all the old books of a whole class in school, in exchange for his new ones, book for book,—looking, of course, to his chance of making sales after the book had been established in the school, for reimbursement and profits; so that at last, the children have to pay for what they supposed was given them. On this subject, too, cannot the mature views of competent and disinterested men, residing, respectively, in all parts of the State, be the means of effecting a much-needed reform?

There is another point, where, as it seems to me, a united effort among the friends of education would, in certain branches of instruction, increase tenfold the efficiency of our Common Schools. I mean, the use of some simple apparatus, so as to employ the eye, more than the ear, in the acquisition of knowledge. After the earliest years of childhood, the superiority of the eye over the other senses, in quickness, in precision, in the vastness of its field of operations, and in its power of penetrating, like a flash, into any interstices,

where light can go and come, is almost infinite. The senses of taste, and smell, and touch, seem to be more the servants of the body than of the soul; and, amongst the infinite variety of objects in the external world, hearing takes notice of sounds only. Close your eyes, and then, with the aid of the other senses, examine a watch, an artisan's workshop, a manufactory, a ship, a steam-engine; and how meagre and formless are all the ideas they present to you. But the eye is the great thoroughfare between the outward and material infinite, and the inward and spiritual infinite. The mind often acquires, by a glance of the eye, what volumes of books and months of study could not reveal so livingly through the ear. Every thing that comes through the eye, too, has a vividness, a clear outline, a just collocation of parts,—each in its proper place,—which the other senses can never communicate. Ideas or impressions acquired through vision are long-lived. Those acquired through the agency of the other senses often die young. Hence, the immeasurable superiority of this organ is founded in Nature. There is a fund of truth in the old saying, that "seeing is believing." There never will be any such maxim, in regard to the other senses. To use the ear instead of the eye, in any case where the latter is available, is as preposterous, as it would be for our migratory birds, in their overland passage, to walk rather than to fly. We laugh at the Germans, because in using their oxen, they attach the load to the horns, instead of the neck; but do we not commit a much greater absurdity, in communicating knowledge through the narrow fissure of the ear, which holds communication only with a small circle of things, and in that circle, only with things that utter a sound, instead of conveying it through the broad portals of the earth and heaven surveying eye?

Nine tenths,—may I not say ninety-nine hundredths,—of all our Common School instruction are conveyed through the ear; or,—which is the same thing,—through the medium of written instead of spoken *words*, where the eye has been taught to do the work of the ear. In teaching those parts of geography which comprise the outlines and natural features of the earth, and in astronomy, the use of the globe and the planetarium would reduce the labor of months to as many hours. Ocular evidence, also, is often indispensable for correcting the imperfections of language, as it is understood by a child. For instance, (and I take this illustration from fact and not from imagination,) a child, born in the interior, and who has never seen the ocean, is taught that the earth is *surrounded* by an elastic medium, called the atmosphere. He thereby gets the idea of perfect circumfusion and envelopment. In the next lesson, he is taught that an island is a small body of land *surrounded* by water. If he has a quick mind, he may get the idea that an island is land, enveloped in water, as the earth is in air. Mature minds always modify the meaning of words and sentences by numerous rules, of which a child knows nothing. If, when speaking of the Deity to a man of common intelligence, I use the word "power," he understands omnipotence; and if I use the same word when speaking of an ant, he understands that I mean strength enough to lift a grain;—but a child would require explanations, limiting the meaning of the word in the one case, and extending it in the other.

Other things being equal, the pleasure which a child enjoys, in studying or contemplating, is proportioned to the liveliness of his perceptions and ideas. A child who spurns books, will be attracted and delighted by visible objects of well-defined forms and striking colors. In the one case, he

sees things through a haze; in the other, by sunlight. A contemplative child, whose mind gets as vivid images from reading as from gazing, always prefers reading. Although it is undoubtedly true, that taste and predilection, in regard to any subject, will give brightness and distinctness to ideas; yet it is also true that bright and distinct ideas will greatly modify tastes and predilections. Now the eye may be employed much more extensively than it ever has been, in giving what I will venture to call the geography of ideas, that is, a perception, where one idea bounds on another, —where the province of one idea ends, and that of the adjacent ideas begins. Could children be habituated to fixing these lines of demarcation, to seeing and feeling ideas as distinctly as though they were geometrical solids, they would then experience an insupportable uneasiness, whenever they were lost in fog-land and among the Isles of the Mist; and this uneasiness would enforce investigation, survey, and perpetual outlook; and in after-life, a power would exist of applying luminous and exact thought to extensive combinations of facts and principles, and we should have the materials of philosophers, statesmen and chief-justices. The pleasure which children enjoy in visiting our miserable toy-shop collections. —the dreams of crazy brains, *done* into wood and pewter,—comes mainly from the vividness, the oneness, wholeness, completeness, of their perceptions. The gewgaws do not give delight, because of their grotesqueness, but in spite of it. Natural ideas derived through a microscope, or from any mechanism which would stamp as deep an imprint and glow with as quick a vitality, would give them far greater delight. And how different, as to attainments in useful knowledge, would children be, at the end of eight or ten years,

accordingly as they had sought their gratifications from one or the other of these sources.

And what higher delight, what reward, at once so innocent and so elevating, as to explain by means of suitable apparatus, to the larger scholars in a school, the cause and manner of an eclipse of the sun or moon! And when those impressive phenomena occur, how beautiful to witness the manifestations of wonder and of reverence for God, which spring spontaneously from the intelligent observation of such sublime spectacles; instead of their being regarded with the horrible imaginings of superstition, or with such stupid amazement, as belongs only to the brutes that perish! If a model were given, every ingenious boy, with a few broken window panes and a pocket-knife, could make a prism. With this, the rainbow, the changing colors of the dew-drop, the gorgeous light of the sunset sky, could be explained; and thus might the minds of children be early imbued with a love of pure and beautiful things, and led upward towards the angel, instead of downward towards the brute, from this middle ground of humanity. Imbue the young mind with these sacred influences, and they will forever constitute a part of its moral being; they will abide with it and tend to uphold and purify it, wherever it may be cast by fortune, in this tumultuous arena of life. A spirit so softened and penetrated, will be

> "Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled;
> You may break, you may ruin the vase, if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still."

At the last session of the Legislature, a law was enacted, authorizing school districts to raise money for the purchase of apparatus and Common School libraries, for the use of the children, to be expended in sums not exceeding thirty dollars, for the first

year, and ten dollars, for any succeeding year. Trifling as this may appear, yet I regard the law as hardly second in importance to any which has been passed since the year 1647, when Common Schools were established. Every district can find some secure place for preserving them, until, in repairing or rebuilding schoolhouses, a separate apartment can be provided for their safe-keeping. As soon as one half the benefits of these instruments of learning shall be understood, I doubt not that public-spirited individuals will be found, in most towns, who will contribute something to the library; and artisans, too, who will feel an honorable pleasure in adding something to the apparatus, wrought by their own hands,—perhaps devised by their own ingenuity. "Build dove-holes," says the proverb, "and the doves will come." And what purer satisfaction, what more sacred object of ambition, can any man propose to himself, than to give the first impulse to an improvement, which will go on increasing in value, forever! It may be said, that mischievous children will destroy or mutilate whatever is obtained for this purpose. But children will not destroy or injure what gives them pleasure. Indeed, the love of malicious mischief, the proneness to deface whatever is beautiful,—this vile ingredient in the old Saxon blood, wherever it flows,—originated, and it is aggravated, by the almost total want, amongst us, of objects of beauty, taste, and elegance, for our children to grow up with, to admire, and to protect.

The expediency of having District School Libraries is fast becoming a necessity. It is too late to stop the art of printing, or to arrest the general circulation of books. Reading of some kind, the children will have; and the question is, whether it is best, that this reading should be supplied to them by the choice of men, whose sole object is

gain; or whether it shall be prepared by wise and benevolent men, whose object is to do good. Probably, not one child in ten, in this State, has free access to any library of useful and entertaining knowledge. Where there are town, parish, or social libraries, they either do not consist of suitable books, or they are burdened with restrictions which exclude more than are admitted. A District School Library would be open to all the children in the district. They would enter it independently. Wherever there is genius, the library would nourish it. Talents would not die of inaction, for want of some sphere for exercise. Habits of reading and reflection would be formed, instead of habits of idleness and malicious mischief. The wealth and prosperity of Massachusetts are not owing to natural position or resources. They exist, in despite of a sterile soil and an inhospitable clime. They do not come from the earth, but from the ingenuity and frugality of the people. Their origin is good thinking, carried out into good action; and intelligent reading in a child will result in good thinking in the man or woman. But there is danger, it is said, of reading bad books. So there is danger of eating bad food; shall we therefore have no harvests? No! It was the kindling excitement of a few books, by which those Massachusetts boys, John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, first struck out an intellectual spark, which broadened into magnitude and brightened into splendor, until it became a mighty luminary, which now stands, and shall forever stand, among the greater lights in the firmament of glory.

But in the selection of books for school libraries, let every man stand upon his honor, and never ask for the introduction of any book, because it favors the distinctive views of his sect or party. A wise man prizes only the free and intelligent as-

sent of unprejudiced minds; he disdains a slavish and non-compos echo, even to his best-loved opinions. In striving together for a common end, peculiar ends must neither be advocated nor assailed. Strengthen the intellect of children, by exercise upon the objects and laws of Nature; train their feelings to habits of order, industry, temperance, justice; to the love of man, because of his wants, and to the love of God, because of his universally-acknowledged perfections; and, so far as public measures, applicable to all, can reach, you have the highest human assurance, that, when they grow up, they will adopt your favorite opinions, if they are right, or discover the true reasons for discarding them, if they are wrong.

An advantage altogether invaluable, of supplying a child, by means of a library and of apparatus, with vivid ideas and illustrations, is, that he may always be possessed, in his own mind, of correct standards and types with which to compare whatever objects he may see in his excursions abroad;—and that he may also have useful subjects of reflection, whenever his attention is not engrossed by external things. A boy who is made clearly to understand the philosophical principle on which he flies his kite, and then to recognize the same principle in a wind or a water-wheel, and in the sailing of a ship;—wherever business or pleasure may afterwards lead him, if he sees that principle in operation, he will mentally refer to it, and think out its applications, when, otherwise, he would be singing or whistling. Twenty years would work out immense results from such daily observation and reflection. Dr. Franklin attributed much of his practical turn of mind,—which was the salient point of his immortality,—to the fact, that his father, in his conversations before the family, always discussed some useful subject,

or developed some just principle of individual or social action, instead of talking forever about trout-catching or grouse-shooting; about dogs, dinners, dice, or trumps. In its moral bearings this subject grows into immense importance. How many months,—may I not say years,—in a child's life, when, with spontaneous activity, his mind hovers and floats wherever it listeth! As he sits at home, amid familiar objects, or walks frequented paths, or lies listlessly in his bed, if his mind be not preoccupied with some substantial subjects of thought, the best that you can hope is, that it will wander through dream-land, and expend its activity in chasing shadows. Far more probable is it, especially if the child is exposed to the contamination of profane or obscene minds, that in these seasons of solitude and reverie, the cockatrice's eggs of impure thoughts and desires will be hatched. And what *boy*, at least, is there who is not in daily peril of being corrupted by the evil communications of his elders? We all know, that there are self-styled gentlemen amongst us,—*self-styled gentlemen*,—who daily, and hourly, lap their tongues in the foulness of profanity; and though, through a morally-insane perversion, they may restrain themselves, in the presence of ladies and of clergymen, yet it is only for the passing hour, when they hesitate not to pour out the pent-up flood, to deluge and defile the spotless purity of childhood,—and this, too, at an age, when these polluting stains sink, centre-deep, into their young and tender hearts, so that no moral bleachery can ever afterwards wholly cleanse and purify them. No parent, no teacher, can ever feel any rational security about the growth of the moral nature of his child, unless he contrives in some way to learn the tenor of his secret, silent meditations, or prepares the means, beforehand, of determining what those meditations shall be. A

child may soon find it no difficult thing, to converse and act by a set of approved rules, and then to retire into the secret chambers of his own soul, and there to riot and gloat upon guilty pleasures, whose act would be perdition, and would turn the fondest home into a hell. But there is an antidote, —I do not say for all, but for most, of this peril. The mind of children can be supplied with vivid illustrations of the works of Nature and of Art; its chambers can be hung round with picture-thoughts and images of truth, and charity, and justice, and affection, which will be companions to the soul, when no earthly friend can accompany it.

It is only a further development of this topic, to consider the inaptitude of many of our educational processes, for making accurately-thinking minds. It has been said by some one, that the good sense and sound judgment, which we find in the community, are only what have escaped the general ravage of a bad education. School studies ought to be so arranged, as to promote a harmonious development of the faculties. In despotic Prussia, a special science is cultivated, under the name of *methodik*, the scope of which is to arrange and adapt studies, so as to meet the wants and exercise the powers of the opening mind. In free America, we have not the name; indeed, we can scarcely be said to have the idea. Surely, the farmer, the gardener, the florist, who have established rules for cultivating every species of grain, and fruit, and flower, cannot doubt, that, in the unfolding and expanding of the young mind, some processes will be congenial, others fatal. Those whose business it is to compound ingredients, in any art, weigh them with the nicest exactness, and watch the precise moments of their chemical combinations. The mechanic selects all his materials with the nicest care, and measures

all their dimensions to a hair's breadth; and he knows that if he fails in aught, he will produce a weak, loose, irregular fabric. Indeed, can you name any business, avocation, profession, or employment, whatever,—even to the making of hobnails or wooden skewers,—where chance, ignorance, or accident, is ever rewarded with a perfect product? But in no calling is there such a diversity as in education,—diversity in principles, diversity in the application of those principles. Discussion, elucidation, the light of a thousand minds brought to a focus, would result in discarding the worst and in improving even the best. Under this head are included the great questions respecting the order and succession of studies; the periods of alternation between them; the proportion between the exact and the approximate sciences; and what is principal and what is subsidiary, in pursuing them.

There is a natural order and progression in the development of the faculties: "First the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear." And in the mind, as in the grain, the blade may be so treated that the full corn will never appear. For instance, if any faculty is brooded upon and warmed into life before the period of its natural development, it will have a precocious growth, to be followed by weakness, or by a want of symmetry and proportion in the whole character. Consequences still worse will follow, where faculties are cultivated in the reverse order of their natural development. Again, if collective ideas are forced into a child's mind, without his being made to analyze them, and understand the individual ideas of which they are composed, the probability is, that the collective idea will never be comprehended. Let me illustrate this position by a case where it is least likely to happen, that we may form some idea of its frequency in other

things. A child is taught to count *ten*. He is taught to repeat the words, *one*, *two*, &c., as words, merely; and if care be not taken, he will attach no more comprehensive idea to the word *ten*, than he did to the word *one*. He will not think of ten ones, as he uses it. In the same way, he proceeds to use the words, hundred, thousand, million, &c., —the idea in his mind, not keeping within hailing distance of the signification of the words used. Hence there is generated a habit of using words, not as the representatives of ideas, but as sounds, merely. How few children there are of the age of sixteen years,—an age at which almost all of them have ceased to attend upon our schools,— who have any adequate conception of the power of the signs they have been using. How few of them know even so simple a truth as this, that, if they were to count one, every second, for ten hours in a day, without intermission, it would take about twenty-eight days to count a million. Yet they have been talking of millions, and hundreds of millions, as though they were units. Now, suppose you speak to such a person of millions of children, growing up under a highly elaborated system of vicious education, unbalanced by any good influences; or suppose you appeal to him, in behalf of a million of people wailing beneath the smitings of the oppressor's rod,—he gets no distinct idea of so many as fifty; and therefore he has no intellectual substratum, upon which to found an appropriate feeling, or by which to graduate its intensity.

Again; in geography, we put a quarto-sized map, or perhaps a globe no larger than a goose's egg, into a child's hands, and we invite him to spread out his mind over continents, oceans, and archipelagoes, at once. This process does not expand the mind of the child to the dimensions of the objects, but it belittles the objects to the nutshell

capacity of the mind. Such a course of instruction may make precocious, green-house children; but you will invariably find, that, when boys are prematurely turned into little men, they remain little men, always. Physical geography should be commenced by making a child describe and plot a room with its fixtures, a house with its apartments, the adjoining yards, fields, roads or streets, hills, waters, &c. Then embracing, if possible, the occasion of a visit to a neighboring town, or county, that should be included. Here, perpetual reference must be had to the points of the compass. After a just extension has been given to his ideas of a county, or a state, then that county or state should be shown to him on a globe; and, cost what labor or time it may, his mind must be expanded to a comprehension of relative magnitudes, so that his idea of the earth shall be as adequate to the size of the earth, as his idea of the house or the field was to the size of the house or the field. Thus the pupil founds his knowledge of unseen things upon the distinct notions of eyesight, in regard to familiar objects. Yet I believe it is not very uncommon to give the mind of the young learner a continent, for a single intellectual meal, and an ocean to wash it down with. It recently happened, in a school within my own knowledge, that a class of small scholars in geography, on being examined respecting the natural divisions of the earth,—its continents, oceans, islands, gulfs, &c.,—answered all the questions with admirable precision and promptness. They were then asked, by a visiter, some general questions respecting their lesson, and, amongst others, whether they had ever seen the earth about which they had been reciting; and they unanimously declared, in good faith, that they never had. Do we not find here an explanation, why there are so many men whose conceptions on all subjects are laid down on so

small a scale of miles,—so many thousand leagues to a hair's breadth? By such absurd processes, no vivid ideas can be gained, and therefore no pleasure is enjoyed. A capacity of wonder is destroyed in a day, sufficient to keep alive the flame of curiosity for years. The subjects of the lessons cease to be new, and yet are not understood. Curiosity, which is the hunger and thirst of the mind, is forever cheated and balked; for nothing but a real idea can give real, true, intellectual gratification. A habit, too, is inevitably formed of reciting, without thinking. At length, the most glib recitation becomes the best; and the less the scholars are delayed by thought, the faster they can prate, as a mill clacks quicker when there is no grist in the hopper. Thoroughness, therefore,—thoroughness, and again I say, *thoroughness*, for the sake of the knowledge, and still more for the sake of the habit,—should, at all events, be enforced; and a pupil should never be suffered to leave any subject, until he can reach his arms quite around it, and clench his hands upon the opposite side. Those persons, who know a little of every thing but nothing well, have been aptly compared to a certain sort of pocket-knife, which some over-curious people carry about with them, which, in addition to a common knife, contains a file, a chisel, a saw, a gimlet, a screw-driver, and a pair of scissors, but all so diminutive, that the moment they are needed for use, they are found useless.

It seems to me that one of the greatest errors in education, at the present time, is the desire and ambition, at single lessons, to teach complex truths, whole systems, doctrines, theorems, which years of analysis are scarcely sufficient to unfold; instead of commencing with simple elements, and then rising, by gradations, to combined results. All is administered in a mass. We strive to introduce

knowledge into the child's mind, the great end first. When lessons are given in this way, the pupil, being unable to comprehend the ideas, tries to remember the words, and thus, at best, is sent away with a single fact, instead of a principle, explanatory of whole classes of facts. The lessons are learned by rote; and when a teacher practises upon the rote system, he uses the minds of the pupils, just as they use their own slates, in working arithmetical questions;—whenever a second question is to be wrought, the first is sponged out, to make room for it. What would be thought of a teacher of music, who should give his pupils the most complicated exercises, before they had learned to sound simple notes? It is said of the athlete, Milo of Crotona, that he began by lifting a calf, and, continuing to lift it daily, he gained strength as fast as the animal gained weight; so that he was able to lift it, when it became an ox. Had he begun by straining to lift an ox, he would probably have broken down, and been afterwards unable to lift even a calf. The point to which I would invite the regards of the whole community, is, whether greater attention should not be paid to gradation, to progression in a natural order, to adjustment, to the preparation of a child's mind for receiving the higher forms of truth, by first making it thoroughly acquainted with their elements. The temptation to this error is perhaps the most seductive, that ever beguiles a teacher from his duty. He desires to make his pupils *appear* well. He forgets that the great objects of their education lie in the power, and dignity, and virtue of life, and not in their recitations, at the end of the quarter. Hence he strives to prepare them for the hastening day of exhibition. They must be able to state, in words, the great results, in science, which human reason has achieved, after almost sixty centuries of labor. For this

purpose,—in which they also are tempted to conspire,—he loads their memories with burden after burden of definitions and formulas; which is about as useful a process,—and is it not also about as honest?—as it would be for the rearer of nursery trees to buy golden pippins in the market, and, tying them upon the branches of his young trees, to palm them off upon purchasers, as though the delicious fruit had been elaborated from the succulence of the stock he sells.

Another question of method, to which I most earnestly solicit the attention of teachers and of the whole public, is, whether there is not too much teaching of words, instead of things. Never was a severer satire uttered against human reason, than that of Mirabeau, when he said, "words are things." That single phrase explains the whole French Revolution. Such a revolution never could have occurred amongst a people who spoke things, instead of words. Just so far as words are things, just so far the infinite contexture of realities pertaining to body and soul, to earth and heaven, to time and eternity, is nothing. The ashes, and shreds, and wrecks of every thing else are of some value; but of words not freighted with ideas, there is no salvage. It is not *words*, but words *fitly spoken*, that are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Words are but purses; things, the shining coin within them. Why buy seventy or eighty thousand purses,—for it is said we have about that number of untechnical words in the language,—without a copper for deposit? I believe it is almost universally true, that young students desire to be composers; and as universally true, that they dread composition. When they would compose, of what service, then, are those columns of spelling-book words, which they have committed to memory by the furlong? Where then, too, are the rich mines of thought contained

in their Readers, their First-Class Books, and their little libraries? These they have been accustomed to consider merely as instruments, to practise pronunciation, emphasis, and cadence, upon. They have moved, for years, in the midst of ideas, like blind men in picture-galleries. Hence they have no knowledge of *things*, and their relations; and, when called upon for composition, they have nothing to compound. But, as the outward and visible sign of composition is a sheet-full of words, a sheet is filled, though more from the dictionary than from the head. This practice comes at last, to make them a kind of sportsmen or warriors, who think their whole business is to fire, not to hit. Some, who have a strong verbal memory, become dexterous in the use of language; so that, if they can have two ideas, on any subject, to set up at the ends, as termini, they will fill up with words any distance of space between them. Those who have not this verbal memory, become the wind-driven bubbles of those who have. When the habit is confirmed, of relying on the verbal faculty, the rest of the mind dies out. The dogma taught by Aristotle, that Nature abhors a vacuum, is experimentally refuted. I know of but one compensation for these word-men; I believe they never become insane. Insanity requires some mind, for a basis.

The subject of penal discipline, I hardly dare to mention; especially discipline by corporal punishment. In this department, extremes both of doctrine and of practice prevail. The public have taken sides, and parties are arrayed against each other. Some repudiate and condemn it, altogether. With others, it is the great motive-power; and they consider it as, at least, the first and second, if not the three estates in the realm of school-keeping. Generally speaking, I fear that but little judgment and forethought are brought to

the decision of its momentous questions. It cannot be discussed, alone. It is closely connected with intellectual progress; its influences pervade the whole moral nature; and it must be looked at, in its relations to them. The justifiable occasions, if any, for inflicting it; the mode, and emphatically, the spirit, of its administration; its instruments; its extent; the conduct that should precede and should follow it,—are questions worthy of the deepest attention. That corporal punishment, considered by itself, and without reference to its ultimate object, is an evil, probably none will deny. Yet, with almost three thousand public schools in this State, composed of all kinds of children, with more than five thousand teachers, of all grades of qualification, to govern them, probably the evils of corporal punishment must be endured, or the greater ones of insubordination and mutiny be incurred. I hesitate also to speak so fully of the magnitude of these evils, as I would wish to do; because there are some excellent teachers, who manage schools without resorting to it; while others, ambitious for the same honor, but destitute of skill and of the divine qualities of love, patience, sympathy, by which alone it can be won, have discarded what they call corporal punishment, but have resorted to other modes of discipline, which, though they may bear a milder name, are, in reality, more severe. To imprison timid children in a dark and solitary place; to brace open the jaws with a piece of wood; to torture the muscles and bones, by the strain of an unnatural position, or of holding an enormous weight; to inflict a wound upon the instinctive feelings of modesty and delicacy, by making a girl sit with the boys, or go out with them, at recess; to bring a whole class around a fellow-pupil, to ridicule and shame him; to break down the spirit of self-respect, by enforcing some igno-

minious compliance; to give a nick-name;—these, and such as these, are the gentle appliances, by which some teachers, who profess to discard corporal punishment, maintain the empire of the schoolroom;—as though the muscles and bones were less corporeal than the skin; as though a wound of the spirit were of less moment than one of the flesh; and the body's blood more sacred than the soul's purity. But of these solemn topics, it is impossible here to speak. I cannot, however, forbear to express the opinion, that punishment should never be inflicted, except in cases of the extremest necessity; while the experiment of sympathy, confidence, persuasion, encouragement, should be repeated, for ever and ever. The fear of bodily pain is a degrading motive; but we have authority for saying, that where there is perfect love, every known law will be fulfilled. Parents and teachers often create that disgust at study, and that incorrigibleness and obstinacy of disposition, which they deplore. It is a sad exchange, if the very blows, which beat arithmetic and grammar into a boy, should beat confidence and manliness out. So it is quite as important to consider what feelings are excited, in the mind, as what are subdued, by the punishment. Which side gains, though the evil spirit of roguery or wantonness be driven out, if seven other evil spirits, worse than the first,—sullenness, irreverence, fraud, lying, hatred, malice, revenge,—are allowed to come in? The motive from which the offence emanated, and the motives with which the culprit leaves the bar of his judge and executioner, are every thing. If these are not regarded, the offender may go away worse than he came, in addition to a gratuitous flagellation. To say a child knows better, is nothing; if he knows better, why does he not do better? The answer to this question reveals the difficulty; and whoever has

not patience and sagacity to solve that inquiry, is as unworthy of the parental trust, as is the physician, of administering to the sick, who prescribes a fatal nostrum, and says, in justification, that he knew nothing of the disease. In fine, if any thing, in the wide range of education, demands patience, forethought, judgment, and the all-subduing spirit of love, it is this; and though it may be too much to say, that corporal punishment can be disused by all teachers, with regard to all scholars, in all schools, yet it may be averred, without exception, that it is never inflicted with the right spirit, nor in the right measure, when it is not more painful to him who imposes, than to him who receives it.

Of emulation in school, as an incitement to effort, I can here say but a word; but I entreat all intelligent men to give to this subject a most careful consideration. And let those who use it, as a quickener of the intellect, beware, lest it prove a depraver of the social affections. There is no necessary incompatibility between the upward progress of one portion of our nature, and the lower and lower debasement of another. The intellect may grow wise, while the passions grow wicked. No cruelty towards a child can be so great as that which barters morals for attainment. If, under the fiery stimulus of emulation, the pupil comes to regard a successful rival with envy or malevolence, or an unsuccessful one with arrogance or disdain; if, in aiming at the goal of precedence, he loses sight of the goal of perfection; if, to gain his prize, he becomes the hypocrite, instead of the reverer of virtue;—then, though his intellect should enter upon the stage of life with all the honors of an early triumph; yet the noblest parts of his nature,—his moral and social affections,—will be the victims, led captive in the retinue. Suppose, in some Theological Seminary,

a prize were offered for the best exposition of the commandment, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*," and two known competitors were to task their intellects, to win it;—and, on the day of trial, one of these neighbor-loving rivals, with dilated nostril and expanded frame, should clutch the honor; while the other neighbor-loving rival, with quivering lip and livid countenance, stood by,—the vulture of envy, all the while, forking her talons into his heart;—would it not be that very mixture of the ludicrous and the horrible, which demons would choose for the subject of an epigram! Paint, or chisel the whole group of *neighbor-loving* rivals, and pious doctors sitting around and mingling,—in one chalice, the hellebore of pride, and in another, the wormwood of defeat,—to be administered to those who should be brothers, and can aught be found more worthy to fill a niche in the council-hall of Pandemonium! Who has not seen winter, with its deepest congelations, come in between ingenuous-minded and loving fellow-students, whose hearts would otherwise have run together, like kindred drops of water? Who has not witnessed a consumption,—not of the lungs, but of the heart; nay, both of lungs and heart,—wasting its victims with the smothered frenzy of emulation? It surely is within the equity of the prayer, "lead *us* not into temptation," not to lead others into it. And ought not the teacher, who, as a general and prevalent,—I do not say a universal rule,—cannot sustain order and insure proficiency, in a school, without resorting to fear and emulation, to consider, whether the fault be in human nature or in himself? And will there ever be any more of that secret, silent beneficence amongst us, where the left hand knows not of the blessings scattered by the right?—will there ever be any less of this deadly strife for the ostensible signs of precedence,

in the social and political arena, while the germs of emulation are so assiduously cultivated in the schoolroom, the academy, and the college? The pale ambition of men, ready to sacrifice country and kind for self, is only the fire of youthful emulation, heated to a white heat. Yet, there is an inborn sentiment of emulation, in all minds, and there are external related objects of that sentiment. The excellent, who may be present with us, but who are advanced in life; the great and good, who are absent, but whose fame is every where; the illustrious dead;—these are the objects of emulation. A rivalry with these yields sacred love, not consuming envy. On these, therefore, let the emulous and aspiring gaze, until their eyes overflow with tears, and every tear will be the baptism of honor and of purity.

Such are some of the most obvious topics, belonging to that sacred work,—the education of children. The science, or philosophical principles on which this work is to be conducted; the art, or manner in which those principles are to be applied, must all be rightly settled and generally understood, before any system of Public Instruction can operate with efficiency. Yet all this has been mainly left to chance. Compared with its deserts, how disproportionate, how little, the labor, cost and talent, devoted to it. We have a Congress, convening annually, at almost incredible expense, to decide upon questions of tariff, internal improvement, and currency. We have a State Legislature, continuing in session more than a fourth part of every year, to regulate our internal polity. We have Courts, making continual circuits through the Commonwealth to adjudicate upon doubtful rights of person or property, however trivial. Every great department of literature and of business has its Periodical. Every party, political, religious and social, has its Press.

Yet Education, that vast cause, of which all other causes are only constituent parts; that cause, on which all other causes are dependent, for their vitality and usefulness,—if I except the American Institute of Instruction, and a few local, feeble, unpatronized, though worthy associations,—Education has literally nothing, in the way of comprehensive organization and of united effort, acting for a common end and under the focal light of a common intelligence. It is under these circumstances; it is in view of these great public wants, that the Board of Education has been established,—not to legislate, not to enforce,—but to collect facts, to educe principles, to diffuse a knowledge of improvements;—in fine, to submit the views of men who have thought much upon this subject to men who have thought but little.

To specify the labors which education has yet to perform, would be only to pass in review the varied interests of humanity. Its general purposes are to preserve the good and to repudiate the evil which now exist, and to give scope to the sublime law of progression. It is its duty to take the accumulations in knowledge, of almost six thousand years, and to transfer the vast treasure to posterity. Suspend its functions for but one generation, and the experience and the achievements of the past are lost. The race must commence its fortunes anew, and must again spend six thousand years, before it can grope its way upward from barbarism to the present point of civilization. With the wisdom, education must also teach something of the follies, of the past, for admonition and warning; for it has been well said, that mankind have seldom arrived at truth, on any subject, until they had first exhausted its errors.

Education is to instruct the whole people in the proper care of the body, in order to augment the

powers of that wonderful machine, and to prevent so much of disease, of suffering, and of premature death. The body is the mind's instrument; and the powers of the mind, like the skill of an artisan, may all be baffled, through the imperfection of their utensils. The happiness and the usefulness of thousands and tens of thousands of men and women have been destroyed, from not knowing a few of the simple laws of health, which they might have learned in a few months;—nay, which might have been so impressed upon them, as habits, in childhood, that they would never think there was any other way. I do not speak of the ruin, that comes from slavery to throned appetites, where the bondage might continue in defiance of knowledge; but I speak of cases, where the prostration of noble powers and the suffering of terrible maladies result from sheer ignorance and false views of the wise laws to which God has subjected our physical nature. No doubt, Voltaire said truly, that the fate of many a nation had depended upon the good or bad digestion of its minister; and how much more extensively true would the remark be, if applied to individuals? How many men perfectly understand the observances by which their horses and cattle are made healthy and strong; while their children are puny, distempered, and have chronic diseases, at the very earliest age, at which so highly-finished an article as a chronic disease can be prepared. There is a higher art than the art of the physician;—the art, not of *restoring*, but of *making* health. Health is a product. Health is a manufactured article, —as much so as any fabric of the loom or the workshop; and, except in some few cases of hereditary taint or of organic lesion from accident or violence, the how much, or the how little, health any man shall enjoy, depends upon his treatment of himself; or rather, upon the treatment of those

who manage his infancy and childhood, and create his habits for him. Situated, as we are, in a high latitude, with the Atlantic ocean on one side and a range of mountains on the other, we cannot escape frequent and great transitions, in the temperature of our weather. Our region is the perpetual battle-ground of the torrid and the arctic, where they alternately prevail; and it is only by a sort of average that we call it *temperate*. Yet to this natural position we must adapt ourselves, or abandon it, or suffer. Hence the necessity of *making* health, in order to endure natural inclemencies; and hence also the necessity of including the simple and benign laws on which it depends, in all our plans of education. Certainly, our hearts should glow with gratitude to Heaven, for all the means of health; but every expression indicating that health is a Divine gift, in any other sense than all our blessings are a Divine gift, should be discarded from the language; and it should be incorporated into the forms of speech, that a man prepares his own health, as he does his own house. Education is to inspire the love of truth, as the supremest good, and to clarify the vision of the intellect to discern it. We want a generation of men above deciding great and eternal principles, upon narrow and selfish grounds. Our advanced state of civilization has evolved many complicated questions respecting social duties. We want a generation of men capable of taking up these complex questions, and of turning all sides of them towards the sun, and of examining them by the white light of reason, and not under the false colors which sophistry may throw upon them. We want no men who will change, like the vanes of our steeples, with the course of the popular wind; but we want men who, like mountains, will change the course of the wind. We want no more of those patriots who exhaust their pa-

triotism, in lauding the past; but we want patriots who will do for the future what the past has done for us. We want men capable of deciding, not merely what is right, in principle,—*that* is often the smallest part of the case;—but we want men capable of deciding what is right in means, to accomplish what is right in principle. We want men who will speak to this great people in counsel, and not in flattery. We want godlike men who can tame the madness of the times, and, speaking divine words in a divine spirit, can say to the raging of human passions, "Peace, be still;" and usher in the calm of enlightened reason and conscience. Look at our community, divided into so many parties and factions, and these again subdivided, on all questions of social, national, and international, duty;—while, over all, stands, almost unheeded, the sublime form of Truth, eternally and indissolubly *One!* Nay, further, those do not agree in thought who agree in words. Their unanimity is a delusion. It arises from the imperfection of language. Could men, who subscribe to the same forms of words, but look into each other's minds, and see, there, what features their own idolized doctrines wear, friends would often start back from the friends they have loved, with as much abhorrence as from the enemies they have persecuted. Now, what can save us from endless contention, but the love of truth? What can save us, and our children after us, from eternal, implacable, universal war, but the greatest of all human powers,—the power of impartial thought? Many,—may I not say most,—of those great questions, which make the present age boil and seethe, like a cauldron, will never be settled, until we have a generation of men who were educated, from childhood, to seek for truth and to revere justice. In the middle of the last century, a great dispute arose among astronomers, respect-

ing one of the planets. Some, in their folly, commenced a war of words, and wrote hot books against each other; others, in their wisdom, improved their telescopes, and soon settled the question forever. Education should imitate the latter. If there are momentous questions which, with present lights, we cannot demonstrate and determine, let us rear up stronger, and purer, and more impartial, minds, for the solemn arbitrament. Let it be for ever and ever inculcated, that no bodily wounds or maim, no deformity of person, nor disease of brain, or lungs, or heart, can be so disabling or so painful, as error; and that he who heals us of our prejudices is a thousand fold more our benefactor, than he who heals us of mortal maladies. Teach children, if you will, to beware of the bite of a mad dog; but teach them still more faithfully, that no horror of water is so fatal as a horror of truth, because it does not come from our leader or our party. Then shall we have more men who will think, as it were, under oath; —not thousandth and ten thousandth transmitters of falsity;—not copyists of copyists, and blind followers of blind followers; but men who can track the Deity in his ways of wisdom. A love of truth,—*a love of truth;* this is the pool of a moral Bethesda, whose waters have miraculous healing. And though we lament that we cannot bequeath to posterity this precious boon, in its perfectness, as the greatest of all patrimonies, yet let us rejoice that we can inspire a love of it, a reverence for it, a devotion to it; and thus circumscribe and weaken whatever is wrong, and enlarge and strengthen whatever is right, in that mixed inheritance of good and evil, which, in the order of Providence, one generation transmits to another.

If we contemplate the subject with the eye of a statesman, what resources are there, in the

whole domain of Nature, at all comparable to that vast influx of power which comes into the world with every incoming generation of children? Each embryo life is more wonderful than the globe it is sent to inhabit, and more glorious than the sun upon which it first opens its eyes. Each one of these millions, with a fitting education, is capable of adding something to the sum of human happiness, and of subtracting something from the sum of human misery; and many great souls amongst them there are, who may become instruments for turning the course of nations, as the rivers of water are turned. It is the duty of moral and religious education to employ and administer all these capacities of good, for lofty purposes of human beneficence,—as a wise minister employs the resources of a great empire. "Suffer little children to come unto me," said the Savior, "and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." And who shall dare say, that philanthropy and religion cannot make a better world than the present, from beings like those in the kingdom of Heaven!

Education must be universal. It is well, when the wise and the learned discover new truths; but how much better to diffuse the truths already discovered, amongst the multitude! Every addition to true knowledge is an addition to human power; and while a philosopher is discovering one new truth, millions may be propagated amongst the people. Diffusion, then, rather than discovery, is the duty of our government. With us, the qualification of voters is as important as the qualification of governors, and even comes first, in the natural order. Yet there is no Sabbath of rest, in our contests about the latter, while so little is done to qualify the former. The theory of our government is,—not that all men, however unfit, shall be voters,—but that every man, by the power

of reason and the sense of duty, shall become fit to be a voter. Education must bring the practice as nearly as possible to the theory. As the children now are, so will the sovereigns soon be. How can we expect the fabric of the government to stand, if vicious materials are daily wrought into its frame-work? Education must prepare our citizens to become municipal officers, intelligent jurors, honest witnesses, legislators, or competent judges of legislation,—in fine, to fill all the manifold relations of life. For this end, it must be universal. The whole land must be watered with the streams of knowledge. It is not enough to have, here and there, a beautiful fountain playing in palace-gardens; but let it come like the abundant fatness of the clouds upon the thirsting earth. Finally, education, alone, can conduct us to that enjoyment which is, at once, best in quality and infinite in quantity. God has revealed to us, —not by ambiguous signs, but by His mighty works;—not in the disputable language of human invention, but by the solid substance and reality of things,—what He holds to be valuable, and what He regards as of little account. The latter He has created sparingly, as though it were nothing worth; while the former He has poured forth with immeasurable munificence. I suppose all the diamonds ever found, could be hid under a bushel. Their quantity is little, because their value is small. But iron ore,—without which mankind would always have been barbarians; without which they would now relapse into barbarism,—he has strewed profusely all over the earth. Compare the scantiness of pearl, with the extent of forests and coal-fields. Of one, little has been created, because it is worth little; of the others, much, because they are worth much. His fountains of naphtha, how few, and myrrh and frankincense, how exiguous; but who can fathom His

reservoirs of water, or measure the light and the air! This principle pervades every realm of Nature. Creation seems to have been projected upon the plan of increasing the quantity, in the ratio of the intrinsic value. Emphatically is this plan manifested, when we come to that part of creation we call *ourselves*. Enough of the materials of worldly good has been created to answer this great principle,—that, up to the point of competence, up to the point of independence and self-respect, few things are more valuable than property; beyond that point, few things are of less. And hence it is, that all acquisitions of property, beyond that point,—considered and used as mere property,—confer an inferior sort of pleasure, in inferior quantities. However rich a man may be, a certain number of thicknesses of woollens or of silks is all he can comfortably wear. Give him a dozen palaces, he can live in but one at a time. Though the commander be worth the whole regiment, or ship's company, he can have the animal pleasure of eating only his own rations; and any other animal eats, with as much relish as he. Hence the wealthiest, with all their wealth, are driven back to a cultivated mind, to beneficent uses and appropriations; and it is then, and then only, that a glorious vista of happiness opens out into immensity and immortality.

Education, then, is to show to our youth, in early life, this broad line of demarcation between the value of those things which can be owned and enjoyed by but one, and those which can be owned and enjoyed by all. If I own a ship, a house, a farm, or a mass of the metals called precious, my right to them is, in its nature, sole and exclusive. No other man has a right to trade with my ship, to occupy my house, to gather my harvests, or to appropriate my treasures to his use. They are mine, and are incapable, both of a sole

and of a joint possession. But not so of the treasures of knowledge, which it is the duty of education to diffuse. The same truth may enrich and ennoble all intelligences at once. Infinite diffusion subtracts nothing from depth. None are made poor because others are made rich. In this part of the Divine economy, the privilege of primogeniture attaches to all; and every son and daughter of Adam are heirs to an infinite patrimony. If I own an exquisite picture or statue, it is mine, exclusively. Even though publicly exhibited, but few could be charmed by its beauties, at the same time. It is incapable of bestowing a pleasure, simultaneous and universal. But not so of the beauty of a moral sentiment; not so of the glow of sublime emotion; not so of the feelings of conscious purity and rectitude. These may shed rapture upon all, without deprivation of any; be imparted, and still possessed; transferred to millions, yet never surrendered; carried out of the world, and still left in it. These may imparadise mankind, and, undiluted, unattenuated, be sent round the whole orb of being. Let education, then, teach children this great truth, written as it is on the fore-front of the universe, that God has so constituted this world, into which He has sent them, that whatever is really and truly valuable may be possessed by all, and possessed in exhaustless abundance.

And now, you, my friends! who feel that you are patriots and lovers of mankind,—what bulwarks, what ramparts for freedom can you devise, so enduring and impregnable, as intelligence and virtue! Parents! among the happy groups of children whom you have at home,—more dear to you than the blood in the fountain of life,—you have not a son nor a daughter who, in this world of temptation, is not destined to encounter perils more dangerous than to walk a bridge of a single plank,

over a dark and sweeping torrent, beneath. But it is in your power and at your option, with the means which Providence will graciously vouchsafe, to give them that firmness of intellectual movement and that keenness of moral vision,—that light of knowledge and that omnipotence of virtue,—by which, in the hour of trial, they will be able to walk, with unfaltering step, over the deep and yawning abyss, below, and to reach the opposite shore, in safety, and honor, and happiness.

LECTURE II.

1838.

LECTURE II

SPECIAL PREPARATION, A PRE-REQUISITE TO TEACHING.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:

After the lapse of another year, we are again assembled to hold counsel together for the welfare of our children. On this occasion, we have much reason to meet each other with voices of congratulation and hearts of gladness. During the past year, the cause of Popular Education, in this Commonwealth, has gained some suffrages of public opinion. On presenting its wants and its claims to citizens in every part of the State, I have found that there were many individuals who appreciated its importance, and who only awaited an opportunity to give utterance and action to their feelings;—in almost every town, some,—in many, a band.

Some of our hopes, also, have become facts. The last Legislature acted towards this cause, the part of a wise and faithful guardian. Inquiries having been sent into all parts of the Commonwealth, to ascertain the deficiencies in our Common School system, and the causes of failure in its workings; and the results of those inquiries having been communicated to the Legislature,—together with suggestions for the application of a few obvious and energetic remedies,—that body forthwith enacted such laws as the wants of the system most immediately and imperiously demanded. Probably, at no session since the origin of our Common School system, have

laws more propitious to its welfare been made, than during the last. True, the substantive parts of the great system of Public Instruction, pre-existed; but, in many respects, these parts were like the wheels of some excellent machine, unskilfully put together; and hence, if not absolutely refusing to go, for want of proper adjustment, yet going, at best, only according to our expressive word, *bunglingly*. The enactments of the last session, have, to no inconsiderable extent, adjusted the relative parts of this machinery, in an admirable manner; and it now only remains for the people to do their part, by vigorously applying the power that is to move it.

For instance, the law formerly compelled towns, under a penalty, to choose school committees; and it accumulated such an amount of duties upon these officers, that the efficiency, nay, I might almost say, the very existence, of the schools, for any useful purpose, depended upon their intelligence and fidelity; and yet, because this law provided no compensation for their services, nor even indemnity for their actual expenses, it left the whole weight of private interest gravitating against public duty. In the apprehension of many persons, too, there seemed to be something of officiousness and obtrusion, when the committees entered earnestly and faithfully upon the discharge of the legal obligations they had assumed. An office was lightly esteemed to which public opinion attached no rank, and the law no emolument. It was an office, too, in which fidelity often gave offence, and one whose duties were always deemed burdensome, and but rarely accounted honorable. Hence, the punctilious discharge of its various duties, required a higher degree of public spirit, or a greater enthusiasm in the noble cause of education, than the present condition of our society is likely to furnish. Besides, many towns circumvented the law; for, though

the law had provided that the *office* of school committee man should not lie dormant, yet it could make no such wakeful provision in regard to the *officer*. Hence, school committees were not unfrequently chosen, by the towns, with a tacit, and sometimes, even, with an express understanding, that they were to sleep during the whole of the school terms, and only to rouse themselves up in sufficient season to make such an annual Return, as would secure a share of the income of the school fund to their respective towns. But this condition of things is now changed. By the late law, school committees are hereafter to receive a moderate compensation for services rendered,—or, at least, a sufficient sum to reimburse the expenses which they actually incur. Is it too much, therefore, for us now to say, in regard to these officers, that, not only their own townsmen, but the friends of education generally, have a right to expect, that they will so fulfil the requisitions of the law, that a looker-on may know what the law is, by seeing what the committees do, as well as he could, by reading its provisions in the pages of the statute book? Is this demand too great, when we consider the claims which the office has upon the efforts of all wise and benevolent men? The committees are to prescribe the books which are to be used in the schools. They are to see that every child whose parents are unable to supply it with books, is supplied at the expense of the town. They are to visit every district school soon after its opening, and shortly before its close, and once a month during its continuance;—and this duty of visitation, let me say, means something more than just stopping, when engaged on some other errand or business, fastening a horse at the schoolhouse door, and going in for a few minutes to rest or to warm. Emphatically,—I would speak it with ten fold emphasis,—they are to see that none but

the very best persons who can possibly be procured, are put in as keepers of that inestimable, unutterable treasure, the children of the district.

Another provision of the late law requires the committee of each town to keep a record, in a permanent form, of all their acts, votes, and proceedings; and, at the end of their official year, to deliver the record-book to their successors in office.

If the affairs of the pettiest manufacturing corporation cannot be systematically nor economically conducted, without a sworn clerk, and the registration of every corporate act, must not the incomparably greater interests of the schools suffer, if all the orders and regulations of the school committees have no other depository, nor means of verification in case of dispute, than the uncertainty of human memory, and the faithlessness of oral testimony?

A far more important duty imposed upon school committees by the new law,—one which will form an epoch in the history of education in Massachusetts,—is that of making to the towns, annually, a "detailed" report of the condition of the schools, "designating particular improvements and defects in the methods or means of education, and stating such facts and suggestions in relation thereto, as, in their opinion, will best promote the interests, and increase the usefulness of said schools." The significance of this provision lies in the word "*detailed.*" The reports are to be specific, not general. They are to expose errors and abuses, and to be accompanied by plans for their rectification. They are to particularize improvements, and to devise the means for their attainment. The mere fact of knowing that a report must be made at the end of the year, will attract the attention of committee men to a variety of facts, and will suggest numerous considerations, which would otherwise elude both their

observation and reflection. We are so constituted that, the moment we have a fixed purpose in our minds, there arises, at once, a sort of elective affinity between that purpose and its related ideas; and the latter will come, one after another, and, as it were, crystallize around the former. Besides, no man ever comprehends his own views clearly and definitely, or ever avails himself of all the resources of his own mind, until he reduces his thoughts to writing, or embodies them in some visible, objective form. To make a "detailed report," which is based upon facts, which will be useful to the town, and creditable to the committee, will doubtless require great attention and forethought. But if school committees perform this duty with half that far-reaching sagacity, that almost incredible thoroughness, which is always displayed by those town-agents who are chosen to employ counsel, and hunt up evidence, in pauper-cases, such reports will be most invaluable documents. And yet the manner in which this duty is performed will settle the question prospectively, for many a child, whether he shall be a pauper or not,—not the question of the body's pauperism only, but of the soul's pauperism.

These annual reports of the committees are by law to be deposited with the town clerk. They are to be transcribed, and the copy forwarded to the office of the Secretary of State, for the use of the Board of Education. Each succeeding year, therefore, there will be placed in the hands of the Board, three hundred reports, describing the condition of the schools, in every part of the State, with more or less particularity and ability, according to the intelligence and fidelity of the respective committees. It seems to me that selections may then be made,—if the work is not too great,—of the most instructive portions of the whole body of these reports. Let a volume con-

sisting of these selections be transmitted to every town in the State. Each town will then receive back its own contribution, in a permanent form, multiplied by the contributions of three hundred other towns. Such a course, if adopted, will make known to all, the views, the plans and experiments of each. It will be a Multiplying-glass, increasing each beam of light, three hundred times. I venture to predict that, hereafter, no document will be found to transcend these, in value, and in the interest and gratitude they will inspire. Posterity will here see what was done for them by their fathers. Surely, the interest inherent in these records, cannot be less than that which has lately led the Commonwealth to publish those Colonial and Revolutionary papers, which trace out the very paths in the wilderness, through which, under the guidance of the pillar and the cloud, our fathers came out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. Compared with the bondage of ignorance and vice, Pharaoh was clement and his task-masters merciful.

Another provision of the law requires that Registers, in such form as shall be prescribed by the Board of Education, shall be kept in all the schools. As a means of collecting accurate statistics, registers are indispensable. They will also reveal a fact, to the existence of which the public eye seems almost wholly closed. I mean the amount or extent of non-attendance upon our schools, and the enormous losses thereby occasioned. In the hand of an adroit teacher, too, the register may be made an efficient means of remedying that irregularity of attendance which it discloses. If the school is what it should be, the remark will be literally true, that every mark in the register indicating a vacancy in the child's seat at school, will indicate a corresponding vacuum in his mind.

But, before I go on to speak of other provisions of the law, perhaps there may be a class of persons ready to ask,—"Why all this interference? Why this obtrusion of the State into the concerns of the individual? Are not our children," say they, "our own? Who can be presumed to care more for them than we do? And whence your authority," they demand, "to fetter our free-will, and abridge our sovereignty in their management?" The vagabond, the drunkard, the monster-parent who wishes to sell his children to continuous labor,—who, for the pittance of money they can earn, is willing they should grow up without schooling, without instruction, and be used, year after year, as parts of machinery,—these may cry out to the Legislature,—"By what right do you come between us and our offspring? By what right do you appoint a Board of Education and a Secretary to pry into our domestic arrangements, and take from us our parental rights? We wish to be our own Board of Education and Secretary also." Such questions may, perhaps, be honestly put, and therefore should be soberly answered.

The children, whom parents have brought into this world, are carried forwards by the ceaseless flow of time, and the irresistible course of nature, and will soon be men. They are daily gathering forces and passions of fearful energy, soon to be expended upon society. The powers of citizenship, which reach every man's home and every man's hearth, will soon be theirs. In a brief space, these children will have the range of the whole community, and will go forth to pollute or to purify, to be bane or blessing to those who are to live with them, and to come after them. On the day when their minority ceases, their parents will deliver them over, as it were, into the hands of society, without any regard to soundness or

unsoundness in their condition. Forthwith, that society has to assume the entire responsibility of their conduct for life;—for society, in its collective capacity, is a real, not a nominal sponsor and godfather for all its children. Society has no option whether to accept or to reject them. Society cannot say to any parent, "Take back this felon-brood of yours; we never ordered any such recruits; we know not what to do with them; we dread them, and therefore we will not receive them;"—but society must equally accept them, whether they are pieces of noblest workmanship, inwrought with qualities of divinest beauty and excellence, or whether they are mere trumpery and gilded pasteboard, impossible to be thought of for any useful purpose. Now, in those cases from which the objectors draw their analogies, the circumstances are totally different. If I make a general contract with my neighbor for an article of merchandize, the intendment of the law is, that it shall be, at least, of a fair, merchantable quality;—and if it be valueless, or even materially defective, in stock or workmanship, the law exonerates me from all obligation to receive it. I may cast it back into the hands of the producer, and make the loss wholly his, not mine. So if, for a sound price, I contract with a dealer to furnish me a horse for a specified journey or business, and he, instead of providing for me an animal suitable for the object stipulated, sends me an old hack, whose only merit is that one might study all the diseases of farriery upon him,—there is not a court or jury in the country but would make the fraudulent jockey take back the beast, and pay smart-money, and all the costs of litigation. But not so, when parents deliver over to the community a son who carries the poison of asps beneath his glistening tongue; or a daughter, who, from her basilisk eye, streams guilt into whomsoever

she looks upon. Twenty-one years after a child's birth,—and often much earlier than that,—be he sot, brawler, libeller, poisoner, lyncher,—society has, none the less, to take him into her bosom, and bear his stings and stabs;—and this, as I suppose, is the reason why all those good citizens who care what they have in their bosoms, have an undoubted right to take these precautions beforehand.

Another provision of law, which transfers the power to select and employ teachers, from the prudential to the town's committee,—unless the town shall otherwise order,—is worthy of commendation. While this arrangement allows a continuance of the old system, in towns where it is preferred, it proposes a course which is far better, and which is sure to be adopted just as fast as the interests of education and the best means of promoting it, become better understood and more appreciated by the community.

But not inferior in importance to any of the preceding, is another law, passed by the Legislature at its last session. It is not a compulsory, but a permissive enactment. You doubtless anticipate, that I refer to the law which authorizes the union of two or more existing school districts, so as to form a Union or Central school, for teaching more advanced studies to the older children.

Heretofore the practice, in most towns, has been, to subdivide territory into smaller and smaller districts; and this practice has drawn after it the calamitous consequences of stinted means, and of course, cheap schoolhouses, cheap teachers and short schools. Under this weakening process, many of our children have fared like southern fruits in a northern clime, where, owing to the coldness of the soil and the shortness of the season, they never more than half ripen. Immature fruits, at the close of the year, are not only val-

useless, but they sometimes breed physical diseases; but such diseases are a blessing compared to those moral distempers which must be engendered, when immature minds, fermenting with unsound principles, are sent forth into the community. The prevailing argument, in favor of the subdivision of districts, has been the inconvenience of sending small children, great distances, to school. The new law remedies this difficulty. It allows the continuation of existing districts for the small scholars, while it invites the union of two or more of them for the accommodation of the larger ones. As the benefits of this arrangement are set forth in my supplementary Report to the Board of Education, on schoolhouses, (pp. 30, 31,) I need not dwell upon them here. On reference to that report, it will be seen that the advantages to the older scholars, attending the union or central school, will be more than doubled, at a diminished expense. Nor will the benefits of this arrangement, to the small children, be less,—particularly, because it will secure to them the more congenial influences of female teaching.

I believe there will soon be an entire unanimity in public sentiment in regarding female as superior to male teaching for young children. As a plain man of excellent sense once said to me, "A woman will find out where a child's mind is, quickest." I may add, that she will not only find where a child's mind is, more quickly than a man would do, but she will follow its movements more readily; and, if it has gone astray, she will lead it back into the right path more gently and kindly.

Under our present system, the proportion of the female to the male teachers, in our public schools, is about as three to two. This disparity of numbers may be increased with advantage to all, both as to quantity and quality of instruction. It is also universally known that there is, in our

community, a vast amount of female talent, of generous, philanthropic purpose, now unappropriated. It lies waste and dormant for want of some genial sphere of exercise; and its possessors are thereby half driven, from mere vacuity of mind, and the irritation of unemployed faculties, to the frivolities and despicableness of fashion, to silly amusements, or to reading silly books, merely to kill time, which, properly understood, means killing one's self. I trust there are many noble-minded young women amongst us, whose souls are impatient of a degradation to that idleness and uselessness to which false notions of rank and wealth would consign them; and who would rejoice, in some form, either as public servants or as private benefactors, to enter this sphere of useful, beneficent employment. As the tone of society now is, the daughters of the poor do not suffer more from a want of the comforts and the refinements of life than the daughters of the rich do, from never knowing or feeling what the high destinies of woman are. But it is beginning to be perceived that the elevation of the character, the condition and the social rank of the female sex, produced by Christianity and other conspiring causes, has, by conferring new privileges, also imposed new duties upon them.

In reference to this topic, I wish it to be considered more deeply than it has ever yet been, whether there be not, in truth, a divinely appointed ministry for the performance of the earlier services in the sacred temple of education. Is there not an obvious, constitutional difference of temperament between the sexes, indicative of a preärranged fitness and adaptation, and making known to us, as by a heaven-imparted sign, that woman, by her livelier sensibility and her quicker sympathies, is the forechosen guide and guardian of children of a tender age? After a

child's mind has acquired some toughness and induration, by exposure for a few years to the world's hardening processes, then let it be subjected to the firmer grasp, to the more forcible, subduing power of masculine hands. But when the infant spirit, which even too rude an embrace would wound, is first ushered into this sharp and thorny life, let whatever the gross earth contains of gentleness, of ethereal delicacy, of loving tenderness, be its welcomer, and cherish it upon its halcyon bosom, and lead it as by still waters. And why should woman, lured by a false ambition to shine in courts or to mingle in the clashing tumults of men, ever disdain this sacred and peaceful ministry? Why, renouncing this serene and blessed sphere of duty, should she ever lift up her voice in the thronged market-places of society, higgling and huckstering to barter away that divine and acknowledged superiority *in sentiment* which belongs to her own sex, to extort confessions from the other, of a mere equality *in reason?* Why, in self-debasement, should she ever strive to put off the sublime affections and the ever-beaming beauty of a seraph, that she may clothe a coarser, though it should be a stronger spirit, in the stalworth limbs and hugeness of a giant? Nature declares that whatever has the robustness of the oak, shall have its ruggedness also. To no portion of her works has she at once given pre-eminence both in strength and in grace. If the intellect of woman, like that of man, has the sharpness and the penetrancy of iron and of steel, it must also be as cold and as hard. No! but to breathe pure and exalted sentiments into young and tender hearts,—to take the censers which Heaven gives, and kindle therein the incense which Heaven loves,—this is her high and holy mission. To be the former of wise and great minds, is as much more noble than to be wise and

great, as the creative is higher than the created. In camps or senates, she could shine but for a day, and with a fitful light; but if, with enduring patience and fidelity, she fulfils her sacred duties to childhood, then, from the sanctuary of her calm and sequestered life, there will go forth a refulgent glory to irradiate all countries and all centuries. The treasures of virtue are self-perpetuating and self-increasing, and when she gathers them into young hearts, to grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength, she makes Time so rich an almoner, that though he goes strowing and scattering his blessings over the earth and over the ages, yet he will never be impoverished, but only so much the more abound. The loftiest spirits, the finest geniuses of pagan antiquity passed by the gods of the deep and full-flowing river with moderated reverence, but, nicely true to a moral and a religious instinct, they bore their richest offerings and paid their deepest homage to the goddess who presided at the fountain.

But amongst all the auspicious events of the past year, ought not the friends of popular education to be most grateful, on account of the offer made by a private gentleman* to the Legislature, of the sum of ten thousand dollars, upon the conditions that the State should add thereto an equal sum, and that the amount should be expended, under the direction of the Board of Education, in qualifying teachers for our Common Schools, and of the promptness and unanimity with which the Legislature acceded to the proposition? I say, the *unanimity*, for the vote was entirely unanimous in the House of Representatives, and there was but one *nay* in the Senate. Vast donations have been made in this Commonwealth, both by the government and by individuals, for the cause

*Hon. Edmund Dwight, of Boston.

of learning in some of its higher, and, of course, more limited departments; but I believe this to be the first instance where any considerable sum has been given for the cause of education, generally, and irrespective of class, or sect, or party. Munificent donations have frequently been made, amongst ourselves, as well as in other States and countries, to perpetuate some distinctive theory or dogma of one's own, or to requite a peculiar few who may have honored or flattered the giver. But this was given to augment the common mass of intelligence, and to promote universal culture; it was given with a high and enlightened disregard of all local, party, personal or sectional views; it was given for the direct benefit of all the heart and all the mind, *extant, or to be extant*, in our beloved Commonwealth; and, in this respect, it certainly stands out almost, if not absolutely alone, both in the amount of the donation, and in the elevation of the motive that prompted it. I will not tarnish the brightness of this deed, by attempting to gild it with praise. One of the truest and most impressive sentiments ever uttered by Sir Walter Scott is, however, so appropriate, and forces itself so strongly upon my mind, that I cannot repress its utterance. When that plain and homely Scotch girl, Jeannie Deans,—the highest of all the characters ever conceived by that gifted author,—is pleading her suit before the British queen,—and showing herself therein to be ten times a queen,—she utters the sentiment I refer to: "But when," says she, "the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body, and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low, then it isna what we hae dune for oursells, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly."

There is, then, at last, on the part of the government of Massachusetts, a recognition of the

expediency of providing means for the special qualification of teachers for our Common Schools; or, at least, of submitting that question to a fair experiment. Let us not, however, deceive or flatter ourselves with the belief, that such an opinion very generally prevails, or is very deeply seated. A few, and those, as we believe, best qualified to judge, hold this opinion as an axiom. But this cannot be said of great numbers; and it requires no prophetic vision to foresee that any plan for carrying out this object, however wisely framed, will have to encounter not only the prejudices of the ignorant, but the hostility of the selfish.

The most momentous practical questions now before our state and country are these: In order to preserve our republican institutions, must not our Common Schools be elevated in character and increased in efficiency? and, in order to bring our schools up to the point of excellence demanded by the nature of our institutions, must there not be a special course of study and training to qualify teachers for their office? No other worldly interest presents any question comparable to these in importance. To the more special consideration of the latter,—namely, whether the teachers of our public schools require a special course of study and training to qualify them for their vocation,—I solicit your attention, during the residue of this address.

I shall not here insist upon any particular *mode* of preparation, or of preparation in any particular class of institutions,—whether Normal Schools, special departments in academies, colleges, or elsewhere,—to the exclusion of all other institutions. What I insist upon, is, not the form, but the substance.

In treating this subject, duty will require me to speak of errors and deficiencies; and of the inadequate conceptions now entertained of the true

office and mission of a teacher. This is a painful obligation, and in discharging it I am sure I shall not be misunderstood by any candid and intelligent mind. Towards the teachers of our schools, —as a class,—I certainly possess none but the most fraternal feelings. Their want of adequate qualifications is the want of the times, rather than of themselves. Teachers, heretofore, have only been partakers in a general error,—an error in which you and I, my hearers, have been as profoundly lost as they. Let this be their excuse hitherto, and let the ignorance of the past be winked at; but the best service we can now render them, is to take this excuse away, by showing the inadequacy and the unsoundness of our former views. Let all who shall henceforth strive to do better, stand acquitted for past delinquencies; but will not those deserve a double measure of condemnation who shall set themselves in array against measures, which so many wise and good men have approved,—at least until those measures have been fairly tested? When the tree shall have been planted long enough to mature its fruit, then, *let it be known by its fruit.*

No one has ever supposed that an individual could build up a material temple, and give it strength, and convenience, and fair proportions, without first mastering the architectural art; but we have employed thousands of teachers for our children, to build up the immortal Temple of the Spirit, who have never given to this divine, educational art, a day nor an hour of preliminary study or attention. How often have we sneered at Dogberry in the play, because he holds that "to read and write comes by nature;" when we ourselves have undertaken to teach, or have employed teachers, whose only fitness for giving instruction, not only in reading and writing, *but in all other things*, has come by nature, if it has come at all;

—that is, in exact accordance with Dogberry's philosophy.

In maintaining the affirmative of this question, —namely, that all teachers do require a special course of study and training, to qualify them for their profession,—I will not higgle with my adversary in adjusting preliminaries. He may be the disciple of any school in metaphysics, and he may hold what faith he pleases, respecting the mind's nature and essence. Be he spiritualist or materialist, it here matters not,—nay, though he should deny that there is any such substance as mind or spirit, at all, I will not stop to dispute that point with him,—preferring rather to imitate the example of those old knights of the tournament, who felt such confidence in the justness of their cause, that they gave their adversaries the advantage of sun and wind. For, whatever the mind may be, in its inscrutable nature or essence, or whether there be any such thing as mind or spirit at all, properly so called, this we have seen and do know, that there come beings into this world, with every incoming generation of children, who, although at first so ignorant, helpless, speechless,—so incapable of all motion, upright or rotary,—that we can hardly persuade ourselves they have not lost their way, and come, by mistake, into the wrong world; yet, after a few swift years have passed away, we see thousands of these same ignorant and helpless beings, expiating horrible offences in prison cells, or dashing themselves to death against the bars of a maniac's cage;—others of them, we see, holding "colloquy sublime," in halls where a nation's fate is arbitrated, or solving some of the mightiest problems that belong to this wonderful universe; —and others still, there are, who, by daily and nightly contemplation of the laws of God, have kindled that fire of divine truth within their

bosoms, by which they become those moral luminaries whose light shineth from one part of the heavens unto the other. And this amazing change in these feeble and helpless creatures,—this transfiguration of them for good or for evil,—is wrought by laws of organization and of increase, as certain in their operation, and as infallible in their results, as those by which the skilful gardener substitutes flowers, and delicious fruits, and healing herbs, for briars and thorns and poisonous plants. And as we hold the gardener responsible for the productions of his garden, so is the community responsible for the general character and conduct of its children.

Some, indeed, maintain,—erroneously as we believe,—that a difference in education is the sole cause of all the differences existing among men. They hold that all persons come into the world just alike in disposition and capacity, though they go through it and out of it, so amazingly diverse. They hold, in short, that if any two men had changed cradles, they would have changed characters and epitaphs;—that, not only does the same quantity of substance or essence go to the constitution of every human mind, but that all minds are of the same quality also,—all having the same powers, and bearing, originally, the same image and superscription, like so many half-dollars struck at the government mint.

But deeply as education goes into the core of the heart and the marrow of the bones, we do not claim for it any such prerogative. There are certain substructures of temperament and disposition, which education finds, at the beginning of its work, and which it can never wholly annul. Nor does it comport with the endless variety and beauty manifested in all other parts of the Creator's works, to suppose that he made all ears and eyes to be delighted with the same tunes and

colors; or provided so good an excuse for plagiarism, as that all minds were made to think the same thoughts. This inherent and original diversity, however, only increases the difficulty of education, and gives additional force to the argument for previous preparation; for, were it true that all children are born just alike, in disposition and capacity, the only labor would be to discover the right method for educating a single child, and to stereotype it for all the rest.

This, however, we must concede to those who affirm the original equality and exact similitude of all minds;—namely, that all minds have the same elementary or constituent faculties. This is all that we mean when we say that human nature is everywhere the same. This is, in part, what the Scriptures mean when they say, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." The contrasts among men result, not from the possession of a different number of original faculties, but from possessing the same faculties, in different proportions, and in different degrees of activity. The civilized men of the present day, have neither more nor less faculties, *in number*, than their barbarian ancestors had. If so, it would be interesting to ascertain about what year, or century, a new good faculty was given to the race, or an old bad one was taken away. An assembly of civilized men, on this side of the globe, convening to devise measures for diminishing the number of capital crimes, and thus to reduce the number of capital punishments, were *born* with the same number and kind of faculties, —though doubtless differing greatly in proportion and in activity,—with a company of Battas islanders, on the opposite side of the globe, who, perhaps at the same time, may be going to attend the holiday rites of a public execution, and, as is their wont, *to dine on the criminal.* As each human face

has the same number of features, each human body the same number of limbs, muscles, organs, &c., so each human soul has the same capacities of Reason, Conscience, Hope, Fear, Love, Self-love, &c. The differences lie in the relative strength and supremacy of these powers. The human eye is composed of about twenty distinct parts or pieces; yet these constituent parts are so differently arranged that one man is far-sighted, another near-sighted. When an oculist has mastered a knowledge of one eye, he knows the general plan upon which all eyes have been formed; but he must still learn the peculiarities of each, or, in his practice, he will ruin all he touches.* When a surgeon, or an assassin, knows where one man's heart is, he knows, substantially, where the hearts of all other men may be found. And so of the mind and its faculties. It is because of this community of original endowments, that all the great works of nature and art and science, address a common susceptibility or capacity, existing in all minds. It is because of this kindred nature that the same earth is given to us all, as a common residence. The possession by each of his complement of powers and susceptibilities, confers the common nature, while the different portions or degrees in which they exist, and the predominance of one or a few over the others, break us up into moral and intellectual classes. It is impossible to vindicate the propriety of making or of carrying a Revelation to the whole

* I have heard that distinguished surgeon, Doct. John C. Warren, of Boston, relate the following anecdote, which happened to him in London:—Being invited to witness a very difficult operation upon the human eye, by a celebrated English oculist, he was so much struck by the skill and science which were exhibited by the operator, that he sought a private interview with him, to inquire by what means he had become so accomplished a master of his art. "Sir," said the oculist, "I spoiled a hat-full of eyes to learn it." Thus it is with incompetent teachers; they may spoil schoolrooms-full of children to learn how to teach,—and perhaps may not always learn even then.

human race, unless that race has common capacities and wants to which the revelation is adapted. And hence we learn the appalling truth,—a truth which should strike "loud on the heart as thunder on the ear,"—that every child born into this world has tendencies and susceptibilities pointing to the furthest extremes of good and evil. Each one has the capacity of immeasurable virtue or vice. As each body has an immensity of natural space open all around it, so each spirit, when waked into life, has an immensity of moral space open all around it. Each soul has a pinion by which it may soar to the highest empyrean, or swoop downwards to the Tartarean abyss. In the feeblest voice of infancy, there is a tone which can be made to pour a sweeter melody into the symphonies of angels, or thunder a harsher discord through the blasphemies of demons. To plume these wings for an upper or a nether flight; to lead these voices forth into harmony or dissonance; to woo these beings to go where they should go, and to be what they should be,—does it, or does it not, my friends, require some knowledge, some anxious forethought, some enlightening preparation?

You must pardon me, if on this subject I speak to you with great plainness; and you must allow me to appeal directly to your own course of conduct in other things. You have property to be preserved for the support of your children while you live, or, when you die, for their patrimony; you have health and life to be guarded and continued, that they may not be bereaved of their natural protectors;—and you have the children themselves, with their unbounded, unfathomable capacities of happiness and misery. Now, in respect to your property, what is it your wont to do, when a young lawyer comes into the village, erects his sign, and, (the most unexclusive of

men,) gives to the public a general invitation? Though he has a diploma from a college, and the solemn approval of bench and bar, yet how warily do the public approach him. How much he is reconnoitred before he is retained. How many premeditated plans are laid to appear to meet him accidentally, to talk over indifferent subjects with him,—the weather, the crops, or Congressional matters,—in order to measure him, and probe him, and see if there be any hopefulness in him. And should all things promise favorably, the young attorney is intrusted, in the first instance, only with some outlawed note, or some doubtful account, before a justice of the peace. No man ever thinks of trusting a case which involves the old homestead, to his inexperienced hands. He would as soon set fire to it.

So, too, of a young physician. No matter from what medical college, home or foreign, he may bring his credentials. From day to day the neighbors watch him without seeming to look at him. In good-wives' parties, the question is confidentially discussed, whether, in a case of exigency, it would be safe to send for him. And when, at last, he is gladdened with a call, it is only to look at some surface ailment, or to *pother* a little about the extremities. Nobody allows him to lay his unpractised hand upon the vitals. Now this common sentiment,—this common practice of mankind,—is only the instinctive dictate of prudence. It is only a tacit recognition of a truth felt by all sensible men, that there are a thousand ways to do a thing wrong, but only one to do it right. And if it be but reasonable to exercise such vigilance and caution, in selecting a healer for our bodies which perish, or a counsellor for our worldly estates, who shall assign limits to the circumspection and fidelity with which the teachers of our children should be chosen, who, in the space of a

few short years, or even months, will determine, as by a sort of predestination, upon so much of their future fortunes and destiny?

Again; it is the universal sense of mankind, that skill and facility, in all other things, depend upon study and practice. We always demand more, where opportunities have been greater. We stamp a man with inferiority, though he does *ten* times better than another, if he has had *twenty* times the advantages. We know that a skilful navigator will carry a vessel through perilous straits, in a gale of wind, and save cargo and lives, while an ignorant one will wreck both, in a broad channel. With what a song of delight we have all witnessed, how easily and surely that wise and good man, at the head of a great institution in our own State, will tame the ferocity of the insane; and how, when each faculty of a fiery spirit bursts away like an affrighted steed from its path, this mighty tamer of madmen will temper and quell their wild impetuosity and restore them to the guidance of reason. Nay, the great moral healer can do this, not to one only, but to hundreds, at a time; while, even in a far shorter period than he asks to accomplish such a wonderful work, an ignorant and passionate teacher will turn a hundred gentle, confiding spirits into rebels and anarchists. And, my hearers, we recognize the existence of these facts, we apply these obvious principles, to every thing but to the education of our children.

Why cannot we derive instruction even from the folly of those wandering show-men who spend a life in teaching brute animals to perform wonderful feats? We have all seen, or at least we have all heard of, some learned horse, or learned pig, or learned dog. Though the superiority over their fellows, possessed by these brute prodigies, may have been owing, in some degree, to the

possession of greater natural parts, yet it must be mainly attributed to the higher competency of their instructer. Their teacher had acquired a deeper insight into their natures; his sagacious practice had discovered the means by which their talents could be unfolded and brought out. However unworthy and even contemptible, therefore, the mere trainer of a dog may be, yet he illustrates a great principle. By showing us the superiority of a well-trained dog, he shows what might be the superiority of a well-trained child. He shows us that higher acquisitions,—what may be called academical attainments,—in a few favored individuals of the canine race, are not so much the results of a more brilliant genius on the part of the dog-pupil, as they are the natural reward and consequence of his enjoying the instructions of a professor who has concentrated all his energies upon dog-teaching.

Surely it will not be denied that a workman should understand two things in regard to the subject-matter of his work;—*first*, its natural properties, qualities and powers; and *secondly*, the means of modifying and regulating them, with a view to improvement. In relation to the mechanic arts, this is admitted by all. Every body knows that the strength of the blow must be adjusted to the malleability of the metal. It will not do to strike glass and flint, either with the same force or with the same implements; and the proper instrument will never be selected by a person ignorant of the purpose to be effected by its use. If a man working on wood, mistakes it for iron, and attempts to soften it in the fire, his product is—ashes. And so if a teacher supposes a child to have but one tendency and one adaptation when he has many;—if a teacher treats a child as though his nature were wholly animal, or wholly intellectual, or wholly moral and religious, he disfigures and

mutilates the nature of that child, and wrenches his whole structure into deformity.

The being, *Man*, is more complex and diversified in constitution and more variously endowed in faculties, than any other earthly work of the Creator. It is in this assemblage of powers and prerogatives that his strength and majesty reside. They constitute his sovereignty and lordship over the creation around him. By our bodily organization we are adapted to the material world in which we are placed;—our eye to the light, which makes known to us every change in the form, motion, color, position, of all objects within visual range;—our ear and tongue to the air, which flows around us in silence, yet is forever ready to be waked into voice and music;—our hand to all the cunning works of art which subserve utility or embellishment. Still more wonderfully does the spiritual nature of man befit his spiritual relations. Whatever there is of law, of order, of duty, in the works of God, or in the progressive conditions of the race, all have their spiritual counterparts within him. By his perceptive and intellectual faculties, he learns the properties of created things, and discovers the laws by which they are governed. By tracing the relation between causes and effects, he acquires a kind of prophetic vision and power; for, by conforming to the unchanging laws of Nature, he enlists her in his service, and she works with him in fulfilling his predictions. Regarded as an individual, and as a member of a race which reproduces itself and passes away, his lower propensities,—those which he holds in common with the brutes,—are the instincts and means to preserve himself and to perpetuate his kind; while by his tastes, and by the social, moral and religious sentiments of which he is capable, he is attuned to all the beauties and sublimities of creation, his heart is made

responsive to all the delights of friendship and domestic affection, and he is invited to hold that spiritual intercourse with his Maker, which at once strengthens and enraptures.

Now the voice of God and of Nature declares audibly which of these various powers within us are to command, and which are to obey; and with which, in every questionable case, resides the ultimate arbitrament. Even the lowest propensities are not to be wholly extirpated. Within the bounds prescribed by the social and the divine law, they have their rightful claims. But the moral and the religious sentiments,—Benevolence, Conscience, Reverence for the All-creating and All-bestowing Power,—these have the prerogative of supremacy and absolute dominion. These are to walk the halls of the soul, like a god, nor suffer rebellion to live under their eye. Yet how easy for this many-gifted being to fall,—more easy, indeed, because of his many gifts. Some subject-faculty, some subordinate power, in this spiritual realm, unfortunately inflamed, or,—what is far more common,—unwisely stimulated by an erroneous education, grows importunate, exorbitant, aggrandizes itself, encroaches upon its fellow-faculties, until, at last, obtaining the mastery, it subverts the moral order of the soul, and wages its parricidal war against the sovereignty of conscience within, and the laws of society and of Heaven without. And how unspeakably dreadful are the retributions which come in the train of these remorseless usurpers, when they obtain dominion over the soul. Take, for instance, the earliest-developed, the most purely selfish and animal appetite that belongs to us,—that for nourishing beverage. It is the first which demands gratification after birth. Subjected to the laws of temperance, it will retain its zest, fresh and genial, for threescore years and ten, and it affords the

last corporal solace upon earth to the parched lips of the dying man. Yet, if the possessor of this same pleasure-giving appetite shall be incited, either by examples of inordinate indulgence, or by festive songs in praise of the vine and the wine-cup, to inflame it, and to feed its deceitful fires, though but for the space of a few short years, then the spell of the sorcerer will be upon him; and, day by day, he will go and cast himself into the fiery furnace which he has kindled;—nor himself, the pitiable victim, alone, but he will seize upon parents and wife and his group of innocent children, and plunge with them all into the seething hell of intemperance.

So there is, in human nature, an innate desire of acquiring property,—of owning something,—of using the possessives *my* and *mine*. Within proper limits, this instinct is laudably indulged. Its success affords a pleasure in which reason can take a part. It stimulates and strengthens many other faculties. It makes us thoughtful and forethoughtful. It is the parent of industry and frugality,—and industry and frugality, as we all know, are blood-relations to the whole family of the virtues. But to the eye and heart of one in whom this love of acquisition has become absorbing and insane, all the diversified substances in creation are reduced to two classes,—that which is gold, and that which is not;—and all the works of Nature are valued or despised, and the laws and institutions of society upheld or assailed, as they are supposed to be favorable or unfavorable to the acquisition of wealth. Whether at home or abroad, in the festive circle or in the funeral train; whether in hearing the fervid and thrilling appeals of the sanctuary, or the pathos of civic eloquence, one idea alone,—that of money, money, money,—holds possession of the miser's soul; its voice rings forever in his ear; and were he in the

garden of Eden,—its beauty, and music, and perfume suffusing all his senses,—his only thought would be, how much money it would bring! Such mischief comes from giving supremacy to a subordinate, though an essential and highly useful faculty. This mischief, to a greater or less extent, parents and teachers produce, when, through an ignorance of the natural and appropriate methods of inducing children to study, they hire them to learn by the offer of pecuniary rewards.

So, too, we all have an innate love for whatever is beautiful;—a sentiment that yearns for higher and higher degrees of perfection in the arts, and in the embellishments of life,—a feeling which would prompt us to "gild refined gold, to paint the lily, to throw a perfume on the violet, and add another hue unto the rainbow." Portions of the external world have been exquisitely adapted to this inborn love of the beautiful, by Him who has so clothed the lilies of the field that they outshine Solomon in all his glory. This sentiment may be too much or too little cultivated;—so little as to make us disdain gratifications that are at once innocent and pure; or so much as to over-refine us into a hateful fastidiousness. In the works of nature, beauty is generally, if not always, subordinated to utility. In cases of incompatibility, gracefulness yields to strength, not strength to gracefulness. How would the rising sun mock us with his splendor, if he brought no life or warmth in his beams. The expectation of autumnal harvests enhances the beauty of vernal bloom. These manifestations of nature admonish us respecting the rank which ornament or accomplishment should hold in the character and in the works of men; and, of course, in the education of children. Christ referred *occasionally* to the beauties and charms of nature, but dwelt *perpetually* upon the obligations of duty and charity. But what oppo-

site and grievous offences are committed on this subject by different portions of society. The laboring classes, by reason of early parental neglect in cultivating a love for the beautiful, often forego pleasures which a bountiful Providence scatters profusely and gratuitously around them, and strows beneath their feet; while there is a class of persons at the other extremity of the social scale, who, from never comprehending the immeasurable value of the objects for which they were created, and the vast beneficence of which, from their wealth and station, they are capable, actually try every thing, however intrinsically noble or sacred, by some conventional law of fashion, by some arbitrary and capricious standard of elegance. In European society, this class of "fashionables" is numerous. They have their imitators here,—beings, who are not men and women, but similitudes only,—who occupy the vanishing point in the perspective of society, where all that is true, or noble, or estimable in human nature, fades away into nothing. With this class it is no matter what a man does with the "Ten Commandments," provided he keeps those of Lord Chesterfield; and, in their society, Beau Brummel would take precedence of Dr. Franklin.

In a Report lately made by the Agricultural Commissioner for the survey of this Commonwealth, I noticed a statement respecting some farmers in the northern part of the county of Essex, who attempted to raise sun-flowers for the purpose of extracting oil from the seeds. Twenty bushels to the acre was the largest crop raised by any one. Six bushels of the seed yielded but one gallon of oil, worth, in the market, one dollar and seventeen cents only. It surely required no great boldness to assert that the experiment did not succeed:—cultivation, one acre; product, three gal-

lons of oil; value, three dollars and fifty cents!—which would, perhaps, about half repay the cost of labor. Woe to the farmer who seeks for independence by raising sun-flowers! Ten times woe to the parents who rear up sun-flower sons or sun-flower daughters,—instead of sons whose hearts glow and burn with an immortal zeal to run the noble career of usefulness and virtue which a happy fortune has laid open before them;—instead of daughters who cherish such high resolves of duty as lift them even above an enthusiasm for greatness, into those loftier and serene regions where greatness comes not from excitement, but is native, and ever-springing and ever-abiding. Every son, whatever may be his expectations as to fortune, ought to be so educated that he can superintend some part of the complicated machinery of social life; and every daughter ought to be so educated that she can answer the claims of humanity, whether those claims require the labor of the head or the labor of the hand. Every daughter ought to be so trained that she can bear, with dignity and self-sustaining ability, those revolutions in Fortune's wheel, which sometimes bring the kitchen up and turn the parlor down.

Again; we have a natural, spontaneous feeling of self-respect, an innate sense that, simply in our capacity as human beings, we are worth something, and entitled to some consideration. This principle constitutes the interior frame-work of some of the virtues, veiled, indeed, by their own beautiful covering, but still necessary in order to keep them in an erect posture, amidst all the overbearing currents and forces of the world. Where this feeling of self-respect exists too weakly, the whole character becomes limber, flaccid, impotent, sinks under the menace of opposition, and can be frightened out of anything or into anything. On the other hand, when this propensity aggran-

dizes itself, and becomes swollen and deformed with pride, and conceit, and intolerance, it is a far more offensive nuisance than many of those which the law authorizes us to abate, summarily, by force and arms. Our political institutions are a rich alluvium for the growth of self-esteem; for, while every body knows that there are the greatest differences between men in point of honesty, of ability, of will to do good and to promote right, yet our fundamental laws,—and rightly too,—ordain a political equality. But what is not right is, that the political equality is the fact mainly regarded, while there is a tendency to disregard the intellectual and moral inequalities. And thus a faculty, designed to subserve, and capable of subserving the greatest good, engenders a low ambition, and fills the land with the war-whoop of party strife.

These are specimens only of a long list of original tendencies or attributes of the human mind, from a more full enumeration and exposition of which, I must, on this occasion, refrain. But have not enough been referred to, to authorize us to assert the general doctrine, that every teacher ought to have some notions, clear, definite, and comprehensive, of the manifold powers,—the various nature,—of the beings confided to his hands, so that he may repress the redundancy of a too luxuriant growth, and nourish the feeble with his fostering care? No idea can be more erroneous than that children go to school to learn the rudiments of knowledge only, and not to form character. The character of children is always forming. No place, no companion is without an influence upon it; and at school it is formed more rapidly than any where else. The mere fact of the presence of so many children together, puts the social or dissocial nature of each into fervid action. To be sent to school, especially in the country, is often

as great an event in a child's life, as it is, in his father's, to be sent to the General Court; and we all know with what unwonted force all things affect the mind, in new places and under new circumstances. Every child, too, when he first goes to school, understands that he is put upon his good behavior; and, with man or child, it is a very decisive thing, and reaches deep into character and far into futurity, when put upon his good behavior, to prove recreant. Now, teachers take children under their care, as it were, *during the first warm days* of the spring of life, when more can be done towards directing their growth and modifying their dispositions, than can be done in years, at a later season of their existence.

Equally indispensable is it, that every teacher should know, by what means,—by virtue of what natural laws,—the human powers and faculties are strengthened or enfeebled. There is a principle running through every mental operation,—without a knowledge of which, without a knowledge how to apply which, the life of the most faithful teacher will be only a succession of well-intentioned errors. The growth or decline of all our powers depends upon a steadfast law. There is no more chance in the processes of their growth or decay than there is in the Multiplication Table. They grow by exercise, and they lose tone and vigor by inaction. All the faculties have their related objects, and they grow by being excited to action through the stimulus or instrumentality of those objects. Each faculty, too, has its own set or class of related objects; and the classes of related objects differ as much from each other, as do the corresponding faculties which they naturally excite. If any one power or faculty, therefore, is to be strengthened, so as to perform its office with facility, precision and despatch,

that identical faculty,—not any other one,—must be exercised. It does not strengthen my left arm to exercise my right; and this is just as true of the powers of the mind, as of the organs of the body. The whole pith of that saying of Solomon, "Train up a child in the way he should go," consists in this principle, because "to train" means to drill, to repeat, to do the same thing over and over again,—that is, *to exercise.* Solomon does not say, "*Tell* a child the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Had he said this, we could refute him daily by ten thousand facts. Unfortunately, education amongst us, at present, consists too much in *telling*, not in *training*, on the part of parents and teachers; and, of course, in *hearing*, not in *doing*, on the part of children and pupils. The blacksmith's right arm, the philosopher's intellect, the philanthropist's benevolence, all grow and strengthen according to this law of exercise. The farmer *works* solid flesh upon his cattle; the pugilist *strikes* vigor into his arms and breast; the foot soldier *marches* strength into his limbs; the practical man *thinks* quickness and judgment into his mind; and the true Christian *lives* his prayers of love and his thoughts of mercy, until every man becomes his brother. Our own experience and observation furnish us with a life-full of evidence attesting this principle. How did our feet learn to walk, our fingers to write, our organs of speech to utter an innumerable variety of sounds? By what means does the musician pass from coarse discords to perfect music,—from hobbling and shambling in his measure, to keeping time like a chronometer,—from a slow and timid touch of keys or chords, to such celerity of movement, that, though his will sends out a thousand commands in a minute, his nimble fingers obey them all? It is this exercise, this repetition, which gives to jug-

glers their marvellous dexterity. By dint of practice, their motions become quicker than our eyesight, and thus elude inspection. A knowledge of this principle solves many of the riddles of life, by showing us whence comes the domineering strength of human appetites and passions. It comes from exercise,—from a long indulgence of them in thought and act,—until the offspring of sinful desire turn back, and feast upon the vitals of the wretch who nurtured them. It is this which makes the miser pant and raven for gain, more and more, just in proportion to the shortness of the life during which he can enjoy it. It is this which sends the drunkard to pay daily tribute to his own executioner. It is this which scourges back the gambler to the hell he dreads.

It is by this law of exercise that the perceptive and reflective intellect,—I mean the powers of observing and judging,—are strengthened. If, therefore, in the education of the child, the action of these powers is early arrested; if his whole time is engrossed and his whole energy drawn away, by other things; or, if he is not supplied with the proper objects or apparatus on which these faculties can exert themselves,—then the after-life of such a child will be crowded with practical errors and misjudgments. As a man, his impressions of things will be faint and fleeting; he will never be able to describe an object as he saw it, nor to tell a story as he heard it. No handicrafts-man or mechanic ever becomes what we call a first-rate workman, until after innumerable experiments and judgments,—that is, repetitions, or exercises. And the rule is the same even with genius;—artisan or artist, he must practise long and sedulously upon lines, proportions, reliefs, before he can become the first sculptor of the age, or the first boot-maker in the city. The teacher, then, must continue to exercise the

powers of his pupils, until he secures accuracy even in the minutest things he teaches. Every child can and should learn to judge, almost with mathematical exactness, how long an inch is;—no matter if he does not guess within a foot of it the first time. Whether the story of Casper Hauser be true or not, it has verisimilitude, and is therefore instructive. It warns us what the general result must be, if, by a non-presentation of their related objects, the faculties of a child are not brought into exercise. We meet with persons, every day, who, in regard to some one or more of the faculties, are Casper Hausers. This happens, almost universally, not through any natural defect, but because parents and teachers have been ignorant, either of the powers to be exercised, or of the related objects through whose instrumentality they can be excited to action.

But here arises a demand for great skill, aptitude and resources, on the part of the teacher; for, by continuing to exercise the same faculty, I do not mean a monotonous repetition of the same action, nor a perpetual presentation of the same object or idea. Such a course would soon cloy and disgust, and thus terminate all effort in that direction. Would a child ever learn to dance, if there were but one figure; or to sing, if there were but one tune? Nature, science, art, offer a boundless variety of objects and processes, adapted to quicken and employ each of the faculties. These resources the teacher should have at his command, and should make use of them, in the order, and for the period, that each particular case may require. Look into the shops of our ingenious artisans and mechanics, and see their shining rows of tools,—hundreds in number,—but each adapted to some particular process in their curious art. Look into the shop or hut of a savage, an Indian mechanic, and you will find his chest

of tools composed of a single jack-knife! So with our teachers. Some of them have apparatus, diagram, chart, model; they have anecdote, epigram, narrative, history, by which to illustrate every branch of study, and to fit every variety of disposition; while the main resource of others, for all studies, for all ages and for all dispositions, is—the rod!

Again; a child must not only be exercised into correctness of observation, comparison and judgment, but into accuracy in the narration or description of what he has seen, heard, thought or felt, so that, whatever thoughts, emotions, memories, are within him, he can present them all to others in exact and luminous words. Dr. Johnson said, "accustom your children constantly to this; if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, do not let it pass, but instantly check them. You do not know where deviation from the truth will end." Every man who sees effects in causes, will fully concur with the Doctor in regard to the value of such a habit of accuracy as is here implied. If, in the narration of an event, or in the recitation of a lesson, a child is permitted to begin at the last end of it, and to scatter the middle about promiscuously, depend upon it, if that child, after growing up, is called into court as a witness, somebody will suffer in fortune, in reputation, or perhaps in life. When practising at the bar, I was once engaged in an important case of slander, where the whole question of the innocence or guilt of the defendant, turned upon the point, whether, at a certain time, he was seen out of one window, or out of another; and the stupid witness first swore that it was one window, then another window, and at last, thought it might be a door; and doubtless, he could have been made to swear that he saw him through the sky-light. Would you

appreciate the importance of accuracy, in observation and statement, take one of those cases which so frequently occur in our courts of law, where a dozen witnesses,—all honest,—swear one way, and another dozen,—equally honest,—counter-swear; and contrast it with a case, which so rarely occurs, where a witness, whose mind, like a copying machine, having taken an exact impression of whatever it has seen or heard, attests to complicated facts, in a manner so orderly, luminous, natural,—giving to each, time, locality, proportion, that when he has finished, every auditor,—bench, bar, spectators,—all feel as though they had been personally present and witnessed the whole transaction. Now, although something of this depends, unquestionably, upon soundness in physical and mental organization; yet a vast portion of it is referable to the early observation or neglect, on the part of teacher or parent, of the law we are considering.

There is another point, too, which the teacher should regard, especially where only a small portion of non-age is appropriated to school attendance. In exercising the faculties for the purpose of strengthening them, the greatest amount of useful knowledge should be communicated. The faculties may be exercised and strengthened in acquiring useful or useless knowledge. A farmer or a stone-mason may exercise and strengthen the muscles of his body, by pitching or rolling timbers or stones, backwards and forwards; but, by converting the same materials into a house or a fence, he may at once gain strength and do good. Every teacher, at the same time that he exercises the faculties of his pupils, ought to impart the greatest amount of valuable knowledge; and he should always be above the temptation of keeping a pupil in a lower department of study, because he himself does not understand the higher; or, on

the other hand, of prematurely carrying his pupil into a higher department, because of his own ignorance of the lower. Suppose a bright boy, for instance, to be studying arithmetic and geography, at school. Now, arithmetic cannot be taught unless it is understood; but, with the help of an atlas, and a text-book whose margin is all covered with questions, the business of teaching geography may be set up on a very slender capital of knowledge. And here a teacher who is obliged to be very economical of his arithmetic, would be tempted to keep his pupil upon all the small towns, and tiny rivers, and dots of islands in the geography, in order to delay him, and gain time, —like the officers of those banks whose specie runs low, who seek to pay off their creditors in *cents*, because it takes so long to count the copper. Every teacher ought to know vastly more than he is required to teach, so that he may be furnished, on every subject, with copious illustration and instructive anecdote; and so that the pupils may be disabused of the notion, they are so apt to acquire, that they carry all knowledge in their satchels. Every teacher should be possessed of a facility at explanation,—a tact in discerning and solving difficulties,—not to be used too often, for then it would supersede the effort it should encourage,—but when it is used, to be quick and sure as a telescope, bringing distant objects near, and making obscure ones distinct. In the important, but grossly neglected and abused exercise of reading, for instance, every new fact, every new idea, is *news* to the child; and, did he fully understand it, he would be as eager to learn it, as we are to learn what is *news* to us. But how, think you, should we be vexed, if our news-bringer spoke every third word in a foreign language; or gave us only a Pennsylvania newspaper printed in German, when we

wanted to know how their votes stood in an election for President. Whatever words a child does not understand, in his reading lesson, are, to him, words in a foreign language; and they must be translated into his own language before he can take any interest in them. But if, instead of being translated into his language, they are left unnoticed, or are translated into another foreign language still,—that is, into other words or phrases of which he is ignorant,—then, the child, instead of delightful and instructive ideas, gets empty words, mere sounds, atmospheric vibrations only. In Dr. Johnson's Dictionary, the word, "*Network*," is defined to be "any thing reticulated or decussated, with interstices between the intersections." Now who, ignorant of the meaning of the word "network," before, would understand it any better by being told, that it is "any thing reticulated or decussated, with interstices between the intersections?" Nor, would he be much enlightened, if, on looking further, he found that the same author had given the following definitions of the defining words:—"reticulated," "*formed with interstitial vacuities;*"—"decussated," "*intersected at acute angles;*"—"interstice," "*space between one thing and another;*"—"intersection," "*point where lines cross each other.*" If this is not, as Milton says, "dark with excess of bright," it is, at least, "darkness visible." A few years since, a geography was published in this State,—the preface of which boasted of its adaptation to the capacities of children;—and, on the second page, there was this definition of the words "zenith and nadir:"—"zenith and nadir, two Arabic words *importing their own signification.*" A few years since, an English traveller and book-maker, who called himself Thomas Ashe, Esq., visited the Big Bone Licks, in Kentucky, where he found the remains of the mammoth, in great abundance, and whence he

carried away several wagon-loads of bones. In describing the size of one of the shoulder-blades of that animal, he says, it "was *about as large as a breakfast table!*" A child's mind may be dark and ignorant before, but, under such explanations as these, darkness will coagulate, and ignorance be sealed in hermetically. Let a school be so conducted but for one season, and all life will be abstracted from it; and it will become the painful duty of the school committee, at its close, to attend a *post mortem* examination of the children, —without even the melancholy satisfaction of believing that science will be benefited by the horrors of the dissection.

Every teacher should be competent to some care of the health of his pupils,—not merely for the purpose of regulating the temperature of the schoolroom, and, of course, the transition which the scholars must undergo, on entering or leaving it, —though this is of no small importance,—but so that, as occasion offers, he may inculcate a knowledge of some of the leading conditions upon which health and life depend. I saw, last year, in the public town school of Northampton,—under the care of Mr. R. M. Hubbard,—more than a hundred boys, from ten or eleven to fifteen or sixteen years of age, who pointed out the place and gave the name of all the principal bones in their bodies, as well as an anatomist would have done; who explained the physiological processes of the circulation of the blood and the alimentation of food, and described the putrefactive action of ardent spirits upon the delicate tissues of the stomach. Now such boys have a chance, nay, a certainty, of far longer life and far better health, than they would otherwise have; and as they grow up, they will be far less easily tempted to emulate either of the three cockney graces,—Gin, Swearing and Tobacco.

But I must pass by other considerations, respecting the growth and invigoration of the intellectual faculties, and the classes of subjects upon which they should be employed. I hasten to the consideration of another topic, incalculably more important.

The moral faculties increase or decline, strengthen or languish, by the same law of exercise. In legislating for men, *actions* are mainly regarded; but in the education of children, *motives are everything*, MOTIVES ARE EVERYTHING. All, this side of the motive, is mere mechanism, and it matters not whether it be done by the hand, or by a crank. There was profound philosophy in the old theological notion, that whoever made a league with the devil, in order to gratify a passion through his help, became the devil's property afterwards. And so, when a teacher stimulates a child to the performance of actions, externally right, by appealing to motives intrinsically wrong, he sells that child into bondage to the wrong motive. Some parents, finding a desire of luxurious food a stronger motive-power in their children than any other, accomplish every thing through its means. They hire them to go to school and learn, to go to church and remember the text, and to behave well before company, by a promise of dainties. Every repetition of this enfeebles the sentiment of duty, through its inaction, while it increases the desire for delicacies, by its exercise; and as they successively come into competition afterwards, the virtue will be found to have become weaker, and the appetite stronger. Such parents touch the wrong pair of nerves,—the sensual instead of the moral, the bestial instead of the divine. These springs of action lie at the very extremes of human nature,—one class down among the brutes, the other up among the seraphim. When a child, so educated, becomes

a man, and circumstances make him the trustee or fiduciary of the friendless and unprotected, and he robs the widow and orphan to obtain the means of luxury or voluptuousness, we exclaim, "Poor human nature," and are ready to appoint a Fast; when the truth is, he was educated to be a knave under that very temptation. Were a surgeon to operate upon a human body, with as little knowledge of his subject as this, and whip round his double-edged knife where the vital parts lie thickest, he would be tried for manslaughter at the next court, and deserve conviction.

Take another example;—and I instance one of the motive-forces which, for the last fifty or a hundred years, has been mainly relied on, in our schools, academies and colleges, as the stimulus to intellectual effort; and which has done more than every thing else, to cause the madness and the profligacy of those political and social rivalries that now convulse the land. Let us take a child who has only a moderate love of learning, but an inordinate passion for praise and place; and we therefore allure him to study by the enticements of precedence and applause. If he will surpass all his fellows, we advance him to the post, and signalize him with the badges of distinction, and never suffer the siren of flattery to cease the enchantments of her song. If he ever has any compassionate misgivings in regard to the effect which his own promotion may have upon his less brilliant, though not less meritorious fellow-pupils, then we seek to withdraw his thoughts from this virtuous channel, and to turn them to the selfish contemplation of his own brilliant fortunes in future years;—if waking conscience ever whispers in his ear, that that pleasure is dishonorable which gives pain to the innocent; then we dazzle him with the gorgeous vision of triumphal honors and applauding multitudes;—and when, in after-

life, this victim of false influences deserts a righteous cause because it is declining, and joins an unrighteous one because it is prospering, and sets his name in history's pillory, to be scoffed and jeered at for ages, then we pour out lamentations, in prose and verse, over the moral suicide! And yet, by such a course of education, he was prepared beforehand, like a skilfully organized machine, to prove a traitor and an apostate at that very conjuncture. No doubt, a college-boy will learn more Greek and Latin if it is generally understood that college-honors are to be mainly awarded for proficiency in those languages; but what care we though a man can speak seven languages, or dreams in Hebrew or Sanscrit, because of their familiarity, if he has never learned the language of sympathy for human suffering, and is deaf when the voice of truth and duty utters their holy mandates? We want men who feel a sentiment, a *consciousness*, of brotherhood for the whole human race. We want men who will instruct the ignorant,—not delude them; who will succor the weak,—not prey upon them. We want men who will fly to the moral breach when the waters of desolation are pouring in, and who will stand there, and, if need be, die there,—applause or no applause. No doubt, every one is bound to take watchful care of that portion of his happiness which rightfully depends upon the good opinion of others; but before any teacher attempts to secure the proficiency of his pupils by inflaming their love of praise and place, ought he not to appeal, with earnest and prolonged entreaty, to every higher sentiment; and even then, should he fail of arousing a desire for improvement, would it not be better to abandon a pupil to mediocrity, or even insignificance, than to ensure him the highest eminence by awakening an unholy ambition in his bosom? It is infinitely better for any nation

to support a hospital for fools, than to have a parliament or a congress of knaves.

And thus it is with all moral developments. Ignorance may appeal to a wrong motive, and thus give inordinate strength to an inferior sentiment, while honestly in quest of a right action. For a few times, perhaps even for a few years, the appeal may be successful; but, by and by, the inferior sentiment, or propensity, will gain predominance, and usurp the throne, and rule by virtue of its own might.

So, too, a train of circumstances may be prepared, or a system of government adopted, designed by their author for good, yet productive of a venomous brood of feelings. Suppose a teacher attempts to secure obedience by fear, instead of love, but still lacks the energy or the talent requisite for success. Forthwith, and from the necessity of the case, there are two hostile parties in that school,—the teacher with his government to maintain, the pupils with their various and ever-springing desires to gratify, in defiance of that government. Not only will there be revolts and mutinies, revolutions and counter-revolutions in such a school, but, what is infinitely worse because of its meanness and baseness, there will be generated a moral pestilence of deception and trickery. The boldest spirits,—those already too bold and fool-hardy,—will break out into open rebellion, and thus begin to qualify themselves to become, in after-life, violators and contemners of the laws of society; while those who are already prone to concealment and perfidy, will sharpen their wits for deception; they will pretend to be saying or doing one thing when saying or doing another; they will sever the connection between tongue and heart; they will make the eyes, the face, and all the organs that contribute to the natural language, belie the thoughts; and, in fine,

will turn the whole body into an instrument of dissimulation. Such children, under such management, are every day preparing to become,—not men of frankness, of ingenuousness, of a beautiful transparency of disposition,—but sappers and miners of character,—men accomplishing all their ends by stratagem and ambush, and as full of guile as the first serpent. Who of us has not seen some individual so secretive and guileful as to be impervious to second-sight, or even to the boasted vision of animal magnetism? I cannot but believe that most of those hateful specimens of duplicity,—I might rather say, of triplicity, or multiplicity,—which we sometimes encounter in society, had their origin in the attempts made in early life, to evade commands injudiciously given, or not enforced when given. If any thing pertaining to the education of children demands discretion, prudence, wisdom, it is the commands which we impose upon them. In no case ought a command ever to be issued to a child without a moral certainty either that it will be voluntarily obeyed, or, if resisted, that it can be enforced; because disobedience to superiors, who stand at first in the place of the child's conscience, prepares the way for disobedience to conscience itself, when that faculty is developed. Hence the necessity of discriminating, as a preliminary, between what a child will do, or can be made to do, and the contrary. Hence, when disobedience is apprehended, the issue should be tried rather on a case of prohibition than of injunction, because a child can be deterred when he cannot be compelled. Hence, also, the necessity of discriminating between what a child has the moral power to do, and what it is in vain to expect from him. Take a child who has been brought up luxuriously, indulgently, selfishly, and command him, in the first instance, to incur some great sacrifice for a mere stranger, or for

some object which he neither understands nor values, and disobedience is as certain as long days in the middle of June;—I mean the disobedience of the spirit, for fear, perhaps, may secure the performance of the outward act. Such a child knows nothing of the impulsions of conscience, of the joyful emotions that leap up in the heart after the performance of a generous deed; and it is as absurd to put such a weight of self-denial upon his benevolence, the first time, as it would be to put a camel's load upon his shoulders. Such a child is deeply diseased. He is a moral paralytic. In regard to all benevolent exertion and sacrifice, he is as weak as an infant; and he can be recovered and strengthened to virtuous resolutions only by degrees. What should we think of a physician, who, the first time his patient emerged from a sick chamber,—pallid, emaciated, tottering,—should prescribe a match at wrestling, or the running of races? Yet this would be only a parallel to the mode in which selfish or vicious children are often treated; nay, some persons prepare or select the most difficult cases,—cases requiring great generosity or moral intrepidity,—by which to break new beginners into the work of benevolence or duty. If, by a bad education, a child has lost all generous affections, (for no child is born without them;) if he never shares his books or divides his luxuries with his playmates; if he hides his playthings at the approach of his little visiters; if his eye never kindles at the recital of a magnanimous deed,—of course I mean one the magnanimity of which he can comprehend,—then he can be won back to kindness and justice only by laborious processes, and in almost imperceptible degrees. In every conversation before such children, generosity and self-denial should be spoken of with a fervor of admiration and a glow of sympathy. Stories should be told or read

before them, in which the principal actors are signalized by some of the qualities they delight in, (always provided that no element of evil mingles with them,) and when their attachments are firmly fastened upon hero or heroine, then the social, amiable and elevated sentiments which are deficient in the children themselves, should be developed in the actors or characters whom they have been led to admire. A child may be led to admire qualities on account of their relationships and associations, when he would be indifferent to them if presented separately. If a child is selfish, the occasion for kind acts should be prepared, where all the accompaniments are agreeable. As the sentiment of benevolence gains tone and strength, and begins to realize some of those exquisite gratifications which God, by its very constitution, has annexed to its exercise, then let the collateral inducements be weakened, and the experiments assume more of the positive character of virtue. In this way, a child so selfish and envious as to be grieved even at the enjoyment of others, may be won, at last, to seek for delight in offices of humanity and self-sacrifice. There is always an avenue through which a child's mind can be reached; the failures come from our want of perseverance and sagacity in seeking it. We must treat moral more as we treat physical distempers. Week after week the mother sits by the sick bed, and welcomes fasting and vigils; her watchfulness surrounds her child, and with all the means and appliances that wealth or life can command, she strives to bar up every avenue through which death can approach him. Did mothers care as much for the virtues and moral habits as for the health and life of their offspring, would they not be as patient, as hopeful, and as long-suffering in administering antidote and remedy to

a child who is morally, as to one who is physically, diseased?

Is it not in the way above described,—after a slowly brightening twilight of weeks, perhaps of months,—that the oculist, at last, lets in the light of the meridian sun upon the couched eye? Is it not in this way, that the convalescent of a fevered bed advances, from a measured pittance of the weakest nutrition, to that audacious health which spurns at all restraints upon appetite, whether as to quantity or quality? For these healings of the diseased eye or body, we demand the professional skill and science of men, educated and trained to the work; nay, if any impostor or empiric wantonly tampers with eye or life, the injured party accuses him, the officers of the law arrest him, the jurors upon their oaths convict him, the judges pass sentence, and the sheriff executes the mandates of the law;—while parties, officers, jurors, judges and sheriffs, with one consent, employ teachers to direct and train the godlike faculties of their children, who never had one hour of special study, who never received one lesson of special instruction, to fit them for their momentous duties.

If, then, the business of education, in all its departments, be so responsible; if there be such liability to excite and strengthen any one faculty of the opening mind, instead of its antagonist; if there be such danger of promoting animal and selfish propensities into command over social and moral sentiments; if it be so easy for an unskilful hand to adjust opportunity to temptation in such a way that the exposed are almost certain to fall; if it be a work of such delicacy and difficulty to reclaim those who have wandered; if, in fine, one, not deeply conversant with the human soul, with all its various faculties and propensities, and with all the circumstances and objects which naturally

excite them to activity, is in incomparably greater danger of touching the wrong spring of action, than one unacquainted with music, is of touching the wrong key or chord of the most complicated musical instrument,—then, ought not every one of those who are installed into the sacred office of teacher, to be "a workman who needeth not to be ashamed?" Surely, they should know, beforehand, how to touch the right spring, with the right pressure, at the right time.

There is a terrible disease that sometimes afflicts individuals, by which all the muscles of the body seem to be unfastened from the volitions of the mind, and then, after being promiscuously transposed, to be re-fastened; so that a wrong pair of muscles is attached to every volition. In such a case, the afflicted patient never does the thing he intends to do. If he would walk forwards, his will starts the wrong pair of muscles, and he walks backwards. When he would extend his right arm to shake hands with you, in salutation, he starts the wrong pair of muscles, thrusts out his left, and slaps or punches you. Precisely so is it with the teacher who knows not what faculties of his pupils to exercise, and by what objects, motives, or processes, they can be brought into activity. He is the *will* of the school; they are the *body* which that will moves; and, through ignorance, he is perpetually applying his will to the wrong points. What wonder, then, if, spending day after day in pulling at the wrong pairs of muscles, the teacher involves the school in inextricable disorder and confusion, and, at last, comes to the conviction that they were never made to go right?

But, says an objector, can any man ever attain to such knowledge that he can touch as he should this "harp of thousand strings?" Perhaps not, I reply; but ask, in my turn, Cannot every man

know better than he now does? Cannot something be done to make good teachers better, and incompetent ones less incompetent? Cannot something be done to promote the progress and to diminish the dangers of all our schools? Cannot something be done to increase the intelligence of those female teachers, to whose hands our children are committed, in the earliest and most impressible periods of childhood;—and thus, in the end, to increase the intelligence of mothers,—for every mother is *ex officio* a member of the College of Teachers? Cannot something be done, by study, by discussion, by practical observation,—and especially by the institution of Normal Schools,—which shall diffuse both the art and the science of teaching more widely through our community, than they have ever yet been diffused?

My friends, you cannot go for any considerable distance in any direction, within the limits of our beloved Commonwealth, without passing one of those edifices professedly erected for the education of our children. Though rarely an architectural ornament, yet, always, they are a moral beauty, to the land in which we dwell. Enter with me, for a moment, into one of these important, though lowly mansions. Survey those thickly seated benches. Before us are clustered the children of to-day, the men of to-morrow, the immortals of eternity! What costly works of art; what splendid galleries of sculpture or of painting, won by a nation's arms, or purchased by a nation's wealth, are comparable in value, to the treasures we have in these children? How many living and palpitating nerves come down from parents and friends, and centre in their young hearts; and, as they shall advance in life, other living and palpitating nerves, which no man can number, shall go out from their bosoms to twine round other hearts, and to feel their throbs of pleasure or of pain, of rapture

or of agony! How many fortunes of others shall be linked with their fortunes, and shall share an equal fate. As yet, to the hearts of these young beings, crime has not brought in its retinue of fears, nor disappointment its sorrows. Their joys *are* joys, and their hopes more real than our realities; and, as visions of the future burst upon their imaginations, their eye kindles, like the young eagle's at the morning sunbeam. Grouping these children into separate circles, and looking forward, for but a few short years, to the fortunes that await them, shall we predict their destiny, in the terrific language of the poet:—

"*These* shall the fury passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind.

"Ambition *this* shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.

"The stings of Falsehood, *those* shall try,
And hard unkindness' alter'd eye
That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow;
And keen Remorse, with blood defiled,
And moody Madness, laughing wild,
Amid severest woe;—"

or, concentrating our whole souls into one resolve, —high and prophetically strong,—that our duty to these children *shall be done*, shall we proclaim, in the blessed language of the Savior;—"IT IS NOT THE WILL OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, THAT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES SHOULD PERISH."

LECTURE III.

1839.

LECTURE III.

THE NECESSITY OF EDUCATION IN A REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:—

THE common arguments in favor of Education have been so often repeated, that, in rising to address you on this subject, I feel like appealing to your own judgment and good sense to bear testimony to its worth, rather than attempting to make your convictions firmer, or your feelings stronger, by any attestations of mine.

I hardly need to say, that by the word *Education*, I mean much more than an ability to read, write, and keep common accounts. I comprehend, under this noble word, such a training of the body as shall build it up with robustness and vigor,—at once protecting it from disease, and enabling it to act, *formatively*, upon the crude substances of nature,—to turn a wilderness into cultivated fields, forests into ships, or quarries and clay-pits into villages and cities. I mean, also, to include such a cultivation of the intellect as shall enable it to discover those permanent and mighty laws which pervade all parts of the created universe, whether material or spiritual. This is necessary, because, if we act in obedience to these laws, all the resistless forces of Nature become our auxiliaries and cheer us on to certain prosperity and triumph; but, if we act in contravention or defiance of these laws, then Nature resists, thwarts, baffles us; and, in the end, it is just as certain that she will overwhelm us with ruin, as it is that God is stronge

than man. And, finally, by the term Education, I mean such a culture of our moral affections and religious susceptibilities, as, in the course of Nature and Providence, shall lead to a subjection or conformity of all our appetites, propensities and sentiments to the will of Heaven.

My friends, is it not manifest to us all, that no individual, unless he has some acquaintance with the lower forms of education, can superintend even the coarsest and most common interests of life, without daily error and daily shame? The general utility of knowledge, also, and the higher and more enduring satisfactions of the intellect, resulting from the discovery and contemplation of those truths with which the material and the spiritual universe are alike filled, impart to this subject a true dignity and a sublime elevation. But, in its office of attempering feelings which otherwise would blast or consume us;—in its authority to say to the clamorous propensities of our nature, "Peace, be still!"—in its auxiliary power to fit us for the endearments of domestic, for the duties of social, and for the sanctity of immortal life;—in its two-fold office of enhancing the enjoyment which each one of us may feel in the virtue and happiness of all others, and of increasing the virtue and happiness of all others, to make a larger fund for common enjoyment;—in these high and sacred prerogatives, the cause of education lays claim to our mind and heart and strength, as one of the most efficient instruments prepared by the Creator for the welfare of His creatures and the honor of Himself.

Take any individual you please, separate him from the crowd of men, and look at him, apart and alone,—like some Robinson Crusoe in a far-off island of the ocean, without any human being around him, with no prospect of leaving any human being behind him,—and, even in such a

solitude, how authoritative over his actions, how decisive of his contemplations and of his condition, are the instructions he received and the habits he formed in early life! But now behold him as one of the tumultuous throng of men; observe the wide influences which he exerts upon others,—in the marts of business, in the resorts of pleasure, in the high places of official trust,—and reflect how many of all these influences, whether beneficent or malign, depend upon the education he has received, and you will have another gauge or standard whereby to estimate the importance of our theme. Look at him again, not as a being, coming, we know not whence, alighting for a brief residence upon this earth, and then making his exit through the door of the tomb, to be seen and heard of no more, and leaving no more impression upon society of his ways or works, than the sea-bird leaves upon the surface of the deep, when she stoops from the upper air, dips her breast for a moment in the wave, and then rises again to a viewless height; but look at him in his relations to posterity, as the father of a family, as a member of a generation which sows those seeds of virtue or vice, that, centuries hence, shall bear fruit or poison;—look at him as a citizen in a free government, throwing his influence and his vote into one or the other of the scales where peace and war, glory and infamy are weighed;—look at him in these relations, and consider how a virtuous or a vicious education tends to fit or to unfit him for them all, and you will catch one more glimpse of the importance of the subject now presented to your consideration. But if we ascend to a still higher point of vision, and,—forgetting the earthly, personal career, and the wide sphere of social influences, and those acts of life which survive life,—fasten our eyes upon effects which education may throw forward into immor-

tal destinies, it is then that we are awed, amazed, overpowered, by the thought, that we have been created and placed in a system, where the soul's eternal flight may be made higher or lower by those who plume its tender wings and direct its early course. Such is the magnitude, the transcendence of this subject. In a philosophical view, beginning at what point we will, and following the most rigid connection and dependence of cause and effect, of antecedent and consequence, we shall find that education is intimately related to every good, and to every evil, which, as mortal, or as immortal beings, we can desire or dread.

Were a being of an understanding mind and a benevolent heart, to see, for the first time, a peaceful babe reposing in its cradle, or on its mother's breast, and were he to be told, that that infant had been so constituted that every joint and organ in its whole frame might become the rendezvous of diseases and racking pains; that such was its internal structure, that every nerve and fibre beneath its skin might be made to throb with a peculiar torture; that, in the endless catalogue of human disasters, maladies, adversities or shame, there was scarcely one to which it would not be exposed; that, in the whole criminal law of society, and in the more comprehensive and self-executing law of God, there was not a crime which its heart might not at some time will, and its hand perpetrate; that, in the ghastly host of tragic passions,—Fear, Envy, Jealousy, Hate, Remorse, Despair,—there was not one which might not lacerate its soul, and bring down upon it an appropriate catastrophe;—were the benevolent spectator whom I have supposed, to see this environment of ills underlying, surrounding, overhanging their feeble and unconscious victim, and, as it were, watching to dart forth and seize it, might he not be excused for wishing the newly-created spirit well back again into non-entity?

But we cannot return to non-entity. We have no refuge in annihilation. Creative energy has been exerted. Our first attribute, the vehicle of all our other attributes,—is immortality. We are of indestructible mould. Do what else we please with our nature and our faculties, we cannot annihilate them. Go where we please, self-desertion is impossible. Banished, we may be, from the enjoyment of God, but never from his dominion. There is no right or power of expatriation. There is no neighboring universe to fly to. If we forswear allegiance, it is but an empty form, for the laws by which we are bound, do not only surround us, but are in us, and parts of us. Whatsoever other things may be possible, yet to break up or suspend this perpetuity of existence; to elude this susceptibility to pains, at once indefinite in number and indescribable in severity; to silence conscience, or say that it shall not hold dominion over the soul; to sink the past in oblivion; or to alter any of the conditions on which Heaven has made our bliss and our woe to depend, —these things are impossible. Personality has been given us, by which we must refer all sensations, emotions, resolves, to our conscious selves. Identity has been given us, by virtue of which, through whatever ages we exist, our whole being is made a unity. Now, whether curses or blessings, by these conditions of our nature we must stand; for they are appointed to us, by a law higher than Fate,—by the law of God.

Were any one of this assembly to be shipwrecked upon a desert island,—"out of Humanity's reach,"—would it not be his first act to ascend the nearest eminence and explore his position? Would he not at once strive to descry the dangers and the resources by which he might be surrounded? And, if reason, or even an enlightened self-love, constitutes any attribute of our

nature, is it any the less our duty,—finding ourselves *to be*, and *to have entered* upon an interminable career of existence,—finding ourselves inwrought and organized with certain faculties and susceptibilities, so that we are necessitated to enjoy pleasure or to suffer pain, and so that neutrality between good and evil is impossible,—is it, I say, any the less our duty and our interest to look around us and within us, and to see what, on the whole, we can best do with this nature and with these faculties, of which we find ourselves in possession? Ought we not to inquire what mighty forces of Nature and of Providence are sweeping us along, and whither their currents are tending? what parts of the great system in which we are placed, can be accommodated to us, and to what parts we must accommodate ourselves?

Before such a theme I stand in awe. On which side shall its vastness be approached? Shall I speak of the principles on which an educational system for a State should be organized; or of the means and agencies by which it should be administered, in contrast with the absence of any fundamental plan? From the Capitol, where the sovereign law is enacted, and whence it is promulgated, to the school district and the fireside, where the grand results of that law are to appear, in a more prosperous, more intelligent, more virtuous, and, of course, more happy generation of men and women, there is a vast intervening distance;—upon which one of the many links of the chain that binds these two extremes together, shall I expatiate?

I venture, my friends, at this time, to solicit your attention, while I attempt to lay before you some of the relations which we bear to the cause of Education, because we are the citizens of a Republic; and thence to deduce some of the reasons, which, under our political institutions, make the

proper training of the rising generation the highest earthly duty of the risen.

It is a truism, that free institutions multiply human energies. A chained body cannot do much harm; a chained mind can do as little. In a despotic government, the human faculties are benumbed and paralyzed; in a Republic, they glow with an intense life, and burst forth with uncontrollable impetuosity. In the former, they are circumscribed and straitened in their range of action; in the latter, they have "ample room and verge enough," and may rise to glory or plunge into ruin. Amidst universal ignorance, there cannot be such wrong notions about right, as there may be in a community partially enlightened; and false conclusions which have been reasoned out, are infinitely worse than blind impulses.

To demonstrate the necessity of education in our government, I shall not attempt to derive my proofs from the history of other Republics. Such arguments are becoming stale. Besides, there are so many points of difference between our own political institutions, and those of any other government calling itself free, which has ever existed, that the objector perpetually eludes or denies the force of our reasoning, by showing some want of analogy between the cases presented.

I propose, therefore, on this occasion, not to adduce, as proofs, what has been true only in past times; but what is true, at the present time, and must always continue to be true. I shall rely, not on precedents, but on the nature of things; and draw my arguments less from history than from humanity.

Now it is undeniable that, with the possession of certain higher faculties,—common to all mankind, —whose proper cultivation will bear us upward to hitherto undiscovered regions of prosperity and glory, we possess, also, certain lower facul-

ties or propensities,—equally common,—whose improper indulgence leads, inevitably, to tribulation, and anguish, and ruin. The propensities to which I refer, seem indispensable to our temporal existence, and, if restricted within proper limits, they are promotive of our enjoyment; but, beyond those limits, they work dishonor and infatuation, madness and despair. As servants, they are indispensable; as masters, they torture as well as tyrannize. Now despotic and arbitrary governments have dwarfed and crippled the powers of doing evil as much as the powers of doing good; but a republican government, from the very fact of its freedom, un-reins their speed, and lets loose their strength. It is justly alleged against despotisms, that they fetter, mutilate, almost extinguish the noblest powers of the human soul; but there is a *per contra* to this, for which we have not given them credit;—they circumscribe the ability to do the greatest evil, as well as to do the greatest good.

My proposition, therefore, is simply this:—If republican institutions do wake up unexampled energies in the whole mass of a people, and give them implements of unexampled power wherewith to work out their will; then these same institutions ought also to confer upon that people unexampled wisdom and rectitude. If these institutions give greater scope and impulse to the lower order of faculties belonging to the human mind, then, they must also give more authoritative control, and more skilful guidance to the higher ones. If they multiply temptations, they must fortify against them. If they quicken the activity and enlarge the sphere of the appetites and passions, they must, at least in an equal ratio, establish the authority and extend the jurisdiction of reason and conscience. In a word, we must not add to

the impulsive, without also adding to the regulating forces.

If we maintain institutions, which bring us within the action of new and unheard-of powers, without taking any corresponding measures for the government of those powers, we shall perish by the very instruments prepared for our happiness.

The truth has been so often asserted, that there is no security for a republic but in morality and intelligence, that a repetition of it seems hardly in good taste. But all permanent blessings being founded on permanent truths, a continued observance of the truth is the condition of a continued enjoyment of the blessing. I know we are often admonished that, without intelligence and virtue, as a chart and a compass, to direct us in our untried political voyage, we shall perish in the first storm; but I venture to add that, without these qualities, we shall not wait for a storm,—we cannot weather a calm. If the sea is as smooth as glass we shall founder, for we are in a stone-boat. Unless these qualities pervade the general head and the general heart, not only will republican institutions vanish from amongst us, but the words *prosperity* and *happiness* will become obsolete. And all this may be affirmed, not from historical examples merely, but from the very constitution of our nature. We are created and brought into life with a set of innate, organic dispositions or propensities, which a free government rouses and invigorates, and which, if not bridled and tamed, by our actually seeing the eternal laws of justice, as plainly as we can see the sun in the heavens, —and by our actually feeling the sovereign sentiment of duty, as plainly as we feel the earth beneath our feet,—will hurry us forward into regions populous with every form of evil.

Divines, moralists, metaphysicians,—almost

without exception,—regard the human being as exceedingly complex in his mental or spiritual constitution, as well as in his bodily organization; —they regard him as having a plurality of tendencies and affections, though brought together and embodied in one person. Hence, in all discussions or disquisitions respecting human nature, they analyze or assort it into different classes of powers and faculties.

First, there is a conscience in every one of us, and a sense of responsibleness to God, which establish a moral relation between us and our Creator; and which,—though we could call all the grandeur and the splendors of the universe our own, and were lulled and charmed by all its music and its beauty,—will forever banish all true repose from our bosom, unless our nature and our lives are supposed to be in harmony with the divine will. The object of these faculties is, their Infinite Creator; and they never can be supremely happy unless they are tuned to perfect concord with every note in the celestial anthems of love and praise.

Then there is a set of faculties that we denominate social or sympathetic, among the most conspicuous of which is benevolence or philanthropy, —a sentiment which mysteriously makes our pulse throb, and our nerves shrink, at the pains or adversity of others, even though, at the same time, our own frame is whole, and our own fortunes gladdening. How beautiful and marvellous a thing it is, when embosomed in a happy family, surrounded by friends and children,—which even Paradise had not,—that the history of idolatry in the far-off islands of the Pacific, or of the burning of Hindoo widows on the other side of the globe, amongst a people whom we never saw and never shall see, should pierce our hearts like a knife! How glorious a quality of our nature it is, that the

story of some old martyr or hero, who nobly upheld truth with life,—though his dust has now been blown about by the winds for twenty centuries,—should transport us with such feelings of admiration and ecstasy, that we long to have been he, and to have borne all his sufferings; and we find ourselves involuntarily sublimed by so noble a passion, that the most terrible form of death, if hallowed by a righteous cause, looks lovely as a bride to the bridegroom!

There are also the yearning, doting fondness of parents for children, of natural kindred for each other, and the passionate, yet pure affection of the sexes, which fit us for the duties and the endearments of domestic life. Even that vague general attachment to our fellow-beings, which binds men together in fraternal associations, is so strong, and is universally recognized as so natural, that we look upon hermits and solitaries as creatures half-mad or half-monstrous. The sphere of these sentiments or affections is around us and before us,—family, neighborhood, country, kind, posterity.

And lastly, there is the strictly selfish part of our nature, which consists of a gang of animal appetites,—a horde of bandit propensities,—each one of which, by its own nature, is deaf to the voice of God, reckless of the welfare of men, blind, remorseless, atheistic;—each one of the whole pack being supremely bent upon its own indulgence, and ready to barter earth and heaven to win it. We all have some pretty definite idea of beasts of prey and of birds of prey; but not among the whelps of the lion's lair,—not among the young of the vulture's nest, are there any spoilers at all comparable to those that may be trained from the appetites and propensities which each human being brings with him into the world. I am sorry not to be able to speak of this part of our common

nature in a more complimentary manner; but to utter what facts will not warrant, would be to exchange the records of truth for a song of Delilah.

The first of these animal propensities is the simple want of food or nourishment. This appetite may be very gentlemanly and well-behaved. There is nothing in it necessarily incompatible with decorum and good-breeding, or with the conscientious fulfilment of every private and every public duty. When duly indulged, and duly restrained, it furnishes the occasions,—around the family and the hospitable board,—for much of the pleasure of domestic, and the enjoyment of social existence. But thousands go through life, without ever having occasion to know or to think of its awful strength. Behold, what this appetite has actually and not unfrequently become, when, taking the ghastly form of Hunger in a besieged city, or amongst a famishing people, it forces the living to feed upon flesh torn from the limbs of the dead. Look at that open boat, weltering in mid ocean; it holds the crew of a foundered vessel who have escaped with life only, but days and days have passed away, and no morsel of food or drop of drink has assuaged the tortures of hunger and thirst. At first, they wept together as suffering friends, then they prayed together as loving Christians; but now friendship is extinct and prayer is choked, for hunger has grown to a cannibal, uttering horrible whispers, and proposing the fatal lot, by which the blood of one is to fill a bowl to be quaffed by the rest! Look again at the ravages of this appetite, in its other and more familiar, though not less appalling forms;—look at its havoc of life in China, where thousands annually perish by opium; in Turkey, where the pipe kills more than the bowstring; and at the Golgothas of Intemperance, in Ire-

land,* in Old England, and in New England. Now, the elements of this appetite are common to us all; and no untempted mortal can tell what he would do, or would not do, if he were in the besieged city, or in the ocean-tost, provisionless boat. The sensations belonging to this appetite reside in the ends of a few nerves,—called by the anatomists, *papillæ*,—which are situated about the tongue and throat; and yet, on the wants of this narrow spot, are founded the cultivation of myriads of orchards, vineyards and gardens, the tilling of grain-fields, prairie-like in extent, the scouring of forests for game, the dredging of seas, and the rearing of cattle upon a thousand hills. Granaries are heaped, cellars filled, vintages flow, to gratify this instinct for food. And what toils and perils, what European as well as African slavery among the ignorant, and what epicurean science among the learned, have their origin and end in this one appetite! Once, cooling draughts from the fountain, and delicious fruits from the earth, sufficed for its demands. Now, whenever the banquet table is spread, there must be mountains of viands and freshets of wine. What absurdities as well as wickednesses, it tempts men, otherwise rational and religious, to commit. Have we not all seen instances of men, who will ask the blessing of Heaven upon the bounties wherewith a paternal Providence has spread their daily board,—who will pray that their bodies may be nourished and strengthened for usefulness, by partaking of its supplies; and will then sit down and almost kill themselves by indulgence! It is as impossible to satisfy the refinements, as to satiate the grossness of this appetite. The Roman, Apicius, by his gold, provided a dish for his table composed of thousands of nightingales'

* At the time this was written, the redemption of Ireland by Father Mathew was only beginning.

tongues; a despot, by his power, distils the happiness of a thousand slaves, to make one delicious drop for his palate. This appetite, then, though consisting of only a few sensations about the mouth and throat, is a crucible in which the treasures of the world may be dissolved. Behold the epicure and the inebriate,—men who affect a lofty indignation if you question that they are rational beings;—see them bartering friends, family and fame, body, soul and estate,—to gratify a space not more than two inches square in the inside of the mouth! Do we not need some new form of expression, some single word, where we can condense, into one monosyllable, the meaning of ten thousand fools!

Take another of these animal wants,—that of clothing. How insignificant it seems, and yet of what excesses it is capable! What sacrifices it demands; what follies and crimes it suborns us to commit! Compare the first fig-leaf suit with the monthly publication of London and Parisian fashions! Our first parents began with a vegetable, pea-green wardrobe, plucked from the nearest tree, and were their own dress-makers. Now, how many fields are tilled for linen and cotton and silks; how many races of animals are domesticated, or are hunted under the line, around the poles, in ocean or in air, that their coverings may supply the materials of ours! How many ships plough the ocean to fetch and carry; what ponderous machinery rolls; how many warehouses burst with an opulence of merchandise,—all having ultimate reference to this demand for covering! Nor is there any assignable limit to the refinements and the expenditures, to the frauds and the cruelties, which may grow on this stock. The demands of this propensity, like those of the former, if suffered to go onward unrestrained, increase to infinity. The Austrian, Prince Esterhazy, lately

visited the different courts of Europe, dressed in a coat which cost five hundred thousand dollars; and it cost him from five hundred to a thousand dollars every time he put it on. Yet, undoubtedly, if he had not thought himself sadly stinted in his means, he would have had a better coat, and underclothes to match!

Nor is this all which is founded upon the sensations of the skin, when the thermometer is much below, or much above sixty-five degrees. Shelter must be had; and how much marble and granite rises from the quarry; what masses of clay are shaped and hardened into bricks; how many majestic forests start from their stations, and move afield, to be built up into villages and cities and temples, for the habitations of men! And, notwithstanding all that has been done under the promptings of this appetite, who, if his wishes could execute themselves, would remain satisfied with the house he lives in, the temple he worships in, or the tomb in which he expects to sleep?

Again; there are seasons of the year when vegetable life fails, when the corn and the vine cease to luxuriate in the fields, and the orchards no longer bend with fruitage. There is also the season of infancy, when, though bountiful nature should scatter her richest productions spontaneously around us, we could not reach out our hands to gather them; and again, there is the season of old age, with its attendant infirmities, when our exhausted frame can no longer procure the necessaries of existence. Now, that in summer we may provide for winter,—that during the vigor of manhood we may lay up provisions for the imbecility of our old age, and for the helplessness of children, we have been endued by our Maker, with an instinct of acquisition, of accumulation;—or, with a desire, as we familiarly express it, to lay up something for a rainy day. Thus a dis-

position, or mental preädaptation, was given us, before birth, for these necessities which were to arise after it, just as our eye was fitted for the light to shine through, before it was born into this heaven-full of sunshine. Look at this blind instinct,—the love of gain,—as it manifests itself even in infancy. A child, at first, has no idea that there is any other owner of the universe but himself. Whatever pleases him, he forthwith appropriates. His wants are his title deeds and bills of sale. He does not ask, in whose garden the fruit grew, or by whose diving the pearl was fished up. Carry him through a museum or a market, and he demands, in perfectly intelligible, though perhaps in inarticulate language, whatever arrests his fancy. His whole body of law, whether civil or criminal,—*omne ejus corpus juris*,—is in three words, "I want it." If the candle pleases him, he demands the candle; if the rainbow and the stars please him, he demands the rainbow and the stars.

And how does this blind instinct overleap the objects for which it was given. Not content with competency in means, and disdaining the gradual accumulations of honest industry, it rises to insatiate avarice and rapacity. From the accursed thirst for gold have come the felon frauds of the market-place, and the more wicked pious frauds of the church, the robber's blow, the burglar's stealthy step around the midnight couch, the pirate's murders, the rapine of cities, the plundering and captivity of nations. Even now, in self-styled Christian communities, are there not men who, under the sharp goadings of this impulse, equip vessels to cross the ocean,—not to carry the glad tidings of the gospel to heathen lands, but to descend upon defenceless villages in a whirlwind of fire and ruin, to kidnap men, women and children, and to transport them through all the horrors

of the middle passage, where their cries of agony and despair outvoice the storm, that the wretched victims may at last be sold into remorseless bondage, to wear chains, and to bequeath chains;—and all this is perpetrated and suffered because a little gold can be transmuted, by such fiery alchemy, from human tears and blood! Such is the inexorable power of cupidity, in self-styled Christian lands, in sight of the spires of God's temples pointing upward to heaven, which, if Truth had its appropriate emblems, would be reversed and point downward to hell.

Startle not, my friends, at these far-off enormities. Are there not monsters amongst ourselves, who sell their own children into bondage for the money they can earn? who coin not only the health of their own offspring, but their immortal capacities of intelligence and virtue, into pelf? Are there not others, who, at home, at the town meeting, and at the school meeting, win all the victories of ignorance by the cry of expense? Are there not men amongst us, possessed of superfluous wealth, who will vote against a blackboard for a schoolroom, because the scantling costs a shilling and the paint sixpence!

Nay, do we not see men of lofty intellects, of minds formed to go leaping and bounding on from star to star in the firmament of knowledge, absorbed, sunk, in the low pursuit of gain; and if, perchance, some of their superfluous coffers are lost, they go mad,—the fools!—and whine and mope in the wards of a lunatic hospital, because, forsooth, they must content themselves with a little less equipage, or upholstery, or millinery! Such follies, losses, crimes, prove to what infinite rapacity the instinct of acquisition may grow.

Again; there is the natural sentiment of self-respect, or self-appreciation;—when existing in excess, it is popularly called self-esteem. This

innate tendency imparts to every individual the feeling that, in and of himself, he is of some mark and consequence. This instinct was given us that it might act outwards and embody itself in all dignity and nobleness of conduct; that it might preserve us, at all times, from whatever is beneath us or unworthy of us, though we were assured that no other being in the universe knew it, or ever would know it. For, when a man of true honor,—one who has formed a just estimate of the noble capacities with which God has endowed him, and of his own duty in using them,—when such a man is beset by a base temptation, and the tempter whispers,—"You may yield, for in this solitude and impenetrable darkness, none can ever know your momentary lapse,"—his indignant reply is, "But I shall know it myself!" Without this elevating and sustaining instinct, existing in some degree, and acting with some efficiency, no man could ever hold himself erect, in the midst of so many millions of other men, each by the law of nature equal to himself. Without this, when surveying the sublimities of creation,—the cataract, the mountain, the ocean, the awful magnificence of the midnight heavens; or when contemplating the power and perfections of Jehovah,—every one would lay his hand on his mouth and his mouth in the dust, never to rise again.

But this common propensity, like the others, is capable of infinite excesses. There are no bounds to its expansiveness and exorbitancy. When acting with intensity, it seems to possess creative power. It changes emptiness into fulness. It not only reveals to its possessor a self-worthiness wholly invisible to others, but it so overflows with arrogance and pride as to confer an excellence upon every thing connected with or pertaining to itself. The tyrant Gessler mounted his cap upon

a pole, and commanded his subjects to pay homage to it. It had imbibed a virtue from contact with his head, which made it of greater value than a nation of freemen. It is said of one of the present British dukes, that he will give a thousand pounds sterling, for a single worthless book, or for some ancient marble or pebble, provided it is known to be the only one of the kind in existence,—*a unique*,—so that his pride can blow its trumpet in the ears of all mankind, and say, "In respect of this old book, or marble, or pebble, I have what no other man has, and am superior to the rest of the world." Constable was so inflated with the supposed honor of being the publisher of Sir Walter Scott's novels, that, in one of his paroxysms of pride, he exclaimed with an oath, "I am all but the author of the Waverley novels!" Yes, he came as near as type-setter! It is this feeling which makes the organ-blower appropriate the plaudits bestowed upon the musician, and the hero's valet mistake himself for his master. It is this propensity that makes a man proud of his ancestors, who were dead centuries before he was born;—proud of garments which he never had wit enough to make, while he despises the tailor by whose superior skill they were prepared;—and proud of owning a horse that can trot a mile in three minutes, though the credit of his speed belongs to the farmer who reared, and the jockey who trained, and even to the hostler who grooms him, infinitely more than to the self-supposed gentleman who sits behind him in a gig, and just *lets him go!* Other selfish propensities play the strangest tricks, delusions, impostures, upon us, and make us knaves and fools; but it is the inflation of pride, more than any thing else, that swells us into an Infinite Sham.

I have time to mention but one more of this lower order of the human faculties,—*the Love of*

Approbation. As a proper self-respect makes us discard and disdain all unworthy conduct, even when alone; so a rational desire to obtain the good-will of others, stimulates us to generosity, and magnanimity, and fortitude, in the performance of our social duties. It is a strong auxiliary motive,—useful as an impulse, though fatal as a guide. I think it is by the common consent of mankind, that the plaudits of the world rank as the third, in the list of rewards for virtuous conduct,—coming next after the smiles of Heaven and the approval of conscience. In this country, the bestowment of offices is the current coin in which the love of approbation pays and receives its debts. Offices, in the United States, seem to be a *legal tender*, for nobody refuses them. But if this desire becomes rabid and inappeasable, if it grows from a subordinate instinct into a domineering and tyrannical passion, it reverses the moral order, and places the applauses of men before the rewards of conscience and the approval of Heaven. The victim of this usurper-passion will find the doctrines of revealed truth in the prevalent opinions of the community where he resides; and the doctrines of political truth in the majority of votes at the last election,—modified by the chances of a change before the next. Under its influence, the intellect will plot any fraud, and the tongue will utter any falsehood, in order to cajole and inveigle a majority of the people; but should that majority fail, it will compel its poor slave to abandon the old party, and try its fortunes with a new one.

There are other original, innate propensities, which cannot properly be discussed, on an occasion like this. Their action, within certain limits, is necessary to self-preservation, and to the preservation of the race; a description of their excesses would make every cheek pale and every heart faint.

Now there are a few general truths appertaining to this whole tribe of propensities. Though existing with different degrees of strength, in different individuals, yet they are common to the whole race. As they are necessary to self-preservation, their bestowment is almost universal, and we regard every man as so far unnatural, and suffering privation, who has not the elements of them all, mingled in his composition. As they are necessary to the continuance of the race, we must suppose, at least during the present constitution of human nature, that they will always exist; and that all improvements in government, science, morals, faith, and other constituents of civilization, will produce their blessed effects, not by extirpating, but by controlling them, and by bringing them into subjection to the social and the divine law. As we have a moral nature to which God speaks, commanding us to love and obey his holy will; as we have a social nature, which sends a circulating current of sympathy from our hearts around through the hearts of children, friends, kindred and kind, mingling our pleasures and pains and their pleasures and pains in one common stream; so by these propensities, we are jointed into this earthly life, and this frame of material things.

Again; each one of these propensities is related to the *whole* of its class of objects, and not to any proportionate or definite quantity of them;—just as the appetite of a wolf or a vulture is adapted or related to the blood of all lambs and all kids, and not merely to the blood of some particular number of lambs and kids. Each one of them, also, is blind to every thing but its own gratification; it sallies forth,—if uncontrolled,—and seizes and riots upon its objects, regardless of all sacrifices, and defiant of all consequences. Each one of them is capacious as an abyss, is

insatiable by indulgence, would consume whatever has been created for all, and then task Omnipotence to invent new pleasures for its pampering. Was any royal epicure ever satisfied, while a luxury was known to exist which he had not tasted? To rear an architectural pile, or a mausoleum, vast as the unrestrained desires of man, the cedars of Lebanon would be too few; nor could the materials of his wardrobe be supplied, though Damascus were his merchant. There have been thousands of men, all whose coffers were literally filled with gold; but where the avaricious man in whose heart there was not room for more coffers? The experiment was tried with Alexander of Macedon, whether the love of power could be satisfied by the conquest of all the nations of the earth. He did not weep, at first, for the conquest of the world; it was only after conquering one world that he wept for the conquest of more. The ambition of Napoleon never burned with a fiercer flame than when he escaped from his island-prison to remount the throne of France; although it is said that the wars in which he had then been engaged had cost Europe five millions of human lives. But to slake his thirst for power and fame, the blood of five millions or of five hundred millions, the destruction of a continent or a constellation, of zone or zodiac, would have been nothing.

And thus it is with all the propensities. Their object must be obtained, whether, like Richard, they murder two male children, or, like Herod, all under two years of age. Pride built the pyramids and the Mexican mounds. Appetite led down the Goths and Vandals into the delicious south. Cupidity brought forth the slave trade. And so of other enormities,—the Bastile, the Inquisition, the Harem,—they grew on the same stock. And though our bodies seem so small, and

occupy so little space, yet, through these propensities, they are capable of sending out earth-o'er-spreading branches, all clustering with abominations.

Our propensities have no affinity with reason or conscience. Did you ever hear two persons conversing about a third, whose ruin and infamy they agreed had come from the amount of his fortune, or from his facilities for indulgence, when, in the very breath in which they spoke of the resistless power of the temptation over him, they did not add that, in their own persons, they should be willing to run the same risk? This is the language of all the propensities. They are willing to run any risk, whether it be of health or of character, of time or of eternity. This explains how it is, that some men not wholly lost to virtue,—men who acknowledge their responsibleness to God, and their obligations to conscience,—but in whom the propensities predominate and tyrannize;—I say this explains how it is that such men, when stung and maddened by the goadings of desire, wish themselves bereft of their better attributes, that they might give full career to passion, without remorse of conscience or dread of retribution. That human depravity, which, hitherto, has made the history of our race, like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentation and mourning and woe, has worked out through these propensities; and, if the very substance and organization of human nature be not changed, by the eradication of these instincts, that depravity which is, to a greater or less degree, to make the future resemble the past, will pour out its agonies and its atrocities through the same channels!

Such, then, are our latent capabilities of evil, —all ready to be evolved, should the restraints of reason, conscience, religion, be removed. Here are millions of men, each with appetites capacious

of infinity, and raging to be satisfied out of a supply of means too scanty for any one of them. Millions of coveting eyes are fastened on the same object,—millions of hands thrust out to seize it. What ravening, torturing, destroying, then, must ensue, if these hounds cannot be lashed back into their kennel. They must be governed; they cannot be destroyed. Nature declares that the germs, the embryos, of these incipient monsters, shall not be annihilated. She reproduces them with every human being that comes into the world. Nor, indeed, is it desirable, even if it were practicable, that they should be wholly expunged and razed out of our constitution. He who made us, knew our circumstances and necessities, and He has implanted them in our nature too deep for eradication. Besides, within their proper sphere, they confer an innocent, though a subordinate enjoyment. Certainly, we would not make all men hermits and anchorites. Let us be just, even to the appetites. No man is the worse because he keenly relishes and enjoys the bountiful provisions which Heaven has made for his food, his raiment, and his shelter. Indeed, why were these provisions ever made, if they are not to be enjoyed? Surely they are not superfluities and supernumeraries, cumbering a creation which would have been more perfect without them. Let them then be acquired and enjoyed, though always with moderation and temperance. Let the lover of wealth seek wealth by all honest means, and with earnestness, if he will;—let him surround himself with the comforts and the embellishments of life, and add the pleasures of beauty to the pleasures of utility. Let every honorable man indulge a quick and sustaining confidence in his own worthiness, whenever disparaged or maligned; and let him count upon the affections of his friends, and the benedictions of his race, as a part of the solid

rewards of virtue. These, and kindred feelings, are not to be crushed, extinguished. Let them rouse themselves in presence of their objects, and rush out to seize them, and neigh, like a war-horse for the battle,—only let them know that they have a rider, to whose eye no mist can dim the severe line they are never to pass, and whose arm can bend every neck of them, like the twig of an osier.

But I must pass to the next topic for consideration,—the stimulus which, in this country, is applied to the propensities; and the free, unbarred, unbounded career, which is here opened for their activity. In every other nation that has ever existed,—not even excepting Greece and Rome,—the mind of the masses has been obstructed in its development. Amongst millions of men, only some half dozen of individuals,—often only a single individual,—have been able to pour out the lava of their passions, with full, volcanic force. These few men have made the Pharaohs, the Neros, the Napoleons of the race. The rest have usually been subjected to a systematic course of blinding, deafening, crippling. As an inevitable consequence of this, the minds of men have never yet put forth one thousandth part of their tremendous energies. Bad men have swarmed upon the earth, it is true, but they have been weak men. Another consequence is, that we, by deriving our impressions from history, have formed too low an estimate of the marvellous powers and capacities of the human being for evil as well as for good. The general estimate is altogether inadequate to what the common mind will be able to effect, when apt instruments are put into its hands, and the wide world is opened for its sphere of operations. Amongst savage nations, it is true, the will has been more

free; but there it has had none of the instruments of civilized life, wherewith to execute its purposes, —such, for instance, as the mechanic arts; a highly cultivated language, with the general ability to read and write it; fire-arms; engineering; steam; the press, and the post-office;—and among civilized nations, though the means have been far more ample, yet the will has been broken or corrupted. Even the last generation in this country,—the generation that moulded our institutions into their present form,—were born and educated under other institutions, and they brought into active life strong hereditary and traditional feelings of respect for established authority, merely because it was established,—of veneration for law, simply because it was law,—and of deference both to secular and ecclesiastical rank, because they had been accustomed to revere rank. But scarcely any vestige of this reverence for the past, now remains. The momentum of hereditary opinion is spent. The generation of men now entering upon the stage of life,—the generation which is to occupy that stage for the next forty years,—will act out their desires more fully, more effectively, than any generation of men that has ever existed. Already, the tramp of this innumerable host is sounding in our ears. They are the men who will take counsel of their desires, and make it law. The condition of society is to be only an embodiment of their mighty will; and if greater care be not taken than has ever heretofore been taken, to inform and regulate that will, it will inscribe its laws, all over the face of society, in such broad and terrific characters, that, not only whoever runs may read, but whoever reads will run. Should avarice and pride obtain the mastery, then will the humble and the poor be ground to dust beneath their chariot wheels; but, on the other hand, should

besotting vices and false knowledge bear sway, then will every wealthy, and every educated, and every refined individual and family, stand in the same relation to society, in which game stands to the sportsman!

In taking a survey of the race, we see that all of human character and conduct may be referred to two forces; the innate force of the mind acting outwards, and the force of outward things acting upon the mind. First, there is an internal, salient, elancing vigor of the mind, which, according to its state and condition, originates thoughts, desires, impulses, and projects them outwards into words and deeds; and secondly, there is the external force of circumstances, laws, traditions, customs, which besieges the mind, environs it, places a guard at all its outer gates, permits some of its desires and thoughts to issue forth, and to become words and actions, but forbids others to escape, beats them back, seals the lips that would utter them, smites off the arm that would perform them, punishes the soul that would send them forth by finding an avenue in every sense and in every nerve, through which to send up tormentors to destroy its hopes and lay waste its sanctuaries; and finally, if all these means fail to subdue and silence the internal energy, then the external power dismisses the soul itself from the earth, by crushing the physical organization which it inhabits. These two forces,—on the one hand, the mind trajecting itself forth, and seeking to do its will on whatever is external to itself,—and, on the other hand, whatever is external to the mind, modifying or resisting its movements,—these constitute the main action of the human drama. As a mathematician would express it, human conduct and character move in the diagonal of these two forces. Sometimes, indeed, both forces are coincident, sometimes antagonistic; but it is use-

less to inquire which force has predominated, as no universal rule can be laid down respecting them. In despotisms, the external prevails; in revolutions,—such as the French, for instance,—the internal. Why are the Chinese, for a hundred successive generations, transcripts and facsimiles of each other, as though the dead grandparent had come back again in the grandchild, and so round and round? It is because, among the Chinese, this external force overlays the growing faculties of the soul, and compels them, as they grow, to assume a prescribed shape. In that country the laws and customs are so inflexible, and the spirit of the people is so impotent, that their minds grow, as it were, into the hollow of a brazen envelope, whose walls are not removable nor penetrable; and hence, all growth must conform to the shape and size of the concave surface. By their education, laws, and penalties, the minds of the people are made to grow into certain social, political, and religious forms, just as certainly, and on the same principle of force, as the feet of their beauties are made, by small, inelastic shoes, to grow hoof-wise. In Russian Poland, a subject is as much debarred from touching certain topics, in the way of discussion, as from seizing on the jewels of the crown. The knout and the Siberian mines await the first outward expression of the transgressor. Hence the divinely-formed soul, created to admire, through intelligence, this glorious universe; to go forth, through knowledge, into all lands and times; to be identified, through sympathy, with all human fortunes; to know its Maker, and its immortal destiny, is driven back at every door of egress, is darkened at every window where light could enter, and is chained to the vassal spot which gave it birth,—where the very earth, as well as its inhabitant, is blasted by the common curse of

bondage. In Oriental and African despotisms, the mind of the millions grows, only as the trees of a noble forest could grow in the rocky depths of a cavern, without strength, or beauty, or healing balm,—in impurity and darkness, fed by poisonous exhalations from stagnant pools, all upward and outward expansion introverted by solid barriers, and forced back into unsightly forms. Thus has it always fared with the faculties of the human soul when caverned in despotism. They have dwelt in intellectual, denser than subterranean, darkness. Their most tender, sweet, and hallowed emotions have been choked and blighted. The pure and sacred effusions of the heart have been converted into hatred of the good and idolatry of the base, for want of the light and the air of true freedom and instruction. The world can suffer no loss, equal to that spiritual loss which is occasioned by attempting to destroy, instead of regulating the energies of the mind.

Since the Christian epoch, great has been the change in Christian countries between the relative strength of the mind, acting outwards, and the strength of outward things, repulsing and stifling the action of the mind. Christianity established one conviction in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands, which other religions had established in the mind of here and there an individual only. This conviction was, that the future existence is infinitely more important than the present ;—the difference between the two being so great as to reduce all mere worldly distinctions to insignificance and nothing. Hence it might have been predicted from the beginning, that the human mind, acting under the mighty stimulus of Christianity, would eventually triumph over despotism. The interests of despotism lie in this life; those of Christianity, not only in this, but in the life to come. It was, therefore

mortality at one end of the lever, and immortality at the other. When one party contends for the blessings of life merely, while the other contends for blessings higher than life, the latter, by a law of the moral nature, must ultimately prevail.

Although many of the ancients had a belief in a future state of existence, yet it was apprehended by them so dimly, and its retributions were pressed home so feebly on their consciences, that the belief appears to have had but little effect upon the conduct of individuals, or the administration and policy of states; and, for all practical purposes, it would hardly be too strong an expression to say, that immortality was *first revealed* by Christ. During the first three centuries of our era, the knowledge of this discovery,—so to call it,—was widely diffused among men. Then, by the union of Church and State, under Constantine, the civil power came in, and attempted to appropriate the benefits of the new discovery to itself, so that it might use divine motives for selfish purposes. And, had the throne and the priesthood sought to govern men by the motive of fear alone, they might have retained their ascendency, —we cannot tell for what period of time. But they found a natural conscience in men, a sense of responsibleness to duty, which they were so short-sighted as to enlist in their service;—I say, short-sighted, for, when they aroused the sentiment of duty in the human soul, and used it as a means of securing obedience to themselves, they called up a power stronger than themselves. The ally was mightier than the chief that invoked its aid. Hence the uprisings, the rebellions of the people against regal and ecclesiastical oppression. Rulers attempted to subdue the people by persecutions, massacres, burnings, but in vain; because, though they could kill men, they could not kill conscience. After a conflict of sixteen cen-

turies, the victory has been achieved. Mind has triumphed over the quellers of mind,—the internal force over the external. When mankind shall be removed by time to such a distance that they can see past events in their true proportions and relative magnitude, this struggle, between oppression on the one side, striving to keep the human mind in its prison-house, and to set an eternal seal upon the door; and, on the other hand, the convulsive efforts of that mind to disinthrall itself, and to utter its impatient thoughts; and to form, and to abide by, its own convictions of truth,—this conflict, I say, will be the grand, central, conspicuous object, in the history of our era. The history of wars between rival dynasties, for the conquest or dismemberment of empires, will fade away, and be but dimly visible in the retrospect; while this struggle between the soul and its enslavers, will stand far out in the foreground,—the towering, supereminent figure, on the historic canvass.

It has not been in accustomed modes, nor with weapons of earthly temper only, that this warfare has been waged. As the energies of the soul, acting under the mighty impulses of a sense of duty and the prospect of an endless futurity, waxed stronger and stronger, tyrants forged new engines to subdue it. Their instruments have been the dungeons of a thousand Bastiles; the Inquisition, whose ministers were literally flames of fire; devastations of whole provinces; huntings of entire communities of men into the mountains, like timorous flocks; massacres,—in one only of which, thirty thousand men and women were slaughtered at the ringing of a signal-bell; and, after exhausting all the agonies of earth and time, they unvaulted the Bottomless Pit, and, suspending their victims over the abyss, they threatened to hurl them down into the arms of

beckoning demons, impatient to begin their pastime of eternal torture. But, impassive to annihilation; though smitten down, yet, with recuperative energy, springing from its fall; victorious over the sufferings of this world and the more formidable terrors of another,—the human soul, immortal, invulnerable, invincible, has at last unmanacled and emancipated itself. It has triumphed; and here, in our age and in our land, it is now rising up before us, gigantic, majestical, lofty as an archangel, and, like an archangel, to be saved or lost by its obedience or its transgressions. Amongst ourselves it is, that this spirit is now walking forth, full of its new-found life, wantoning in freshly-discovered energies, surrounded by all the objects which can inflame its boundless appetites, and, as yet, too purblind, from the long darkness of its prison-house, to discern clearly between its blessing and its bane. That unconquerable force of the human soul, which all the arts and power of despotism,—which all the enginery borrowed from both worlds,—could not subdue, is here, amongst ourselves, to do its sovereign will.

Let us now turn for a moment to see what means and stimulants our institutions have provided for the use of the mighty powers and passions they have unloosed. No apparatus so skilful was ever before devised. Instead of the slow and cumbrous machinery of former times, we have provided that which is quick-working and far-reaching, and which may be used for the destruction as easily as for the welfare of its possessors. Our institutions furnish as great facilities for wicked men, in all departments of wickedness, as phosphorus and lucifer matches furnish to the incendiary. What chemistry has done, in these preparations, over the old art of rubbing two sticks

together, for the wretch who would fire your dwelling, our social partnerships have done for flagitious and unprincipled men. Through the right,—almost universal,—of suffrage, we have established a community of power; and no proposition is more plain and self-evident, than that nothing but mere popular inclination lies between a community of power and a community in every thing else. And though, in the long-run, and when other things are equal, a righteous cause always has a decisive advantage over an evil one, yet, in the first onset between right and wrong, bad men possess one advantage over the good. They have double resources,—two armories. The arts of guilt are as welcome to them as the practices of justice. They can use poisoned weapons as well as those approved by the usages of war.

Again; has it been sufficiently considered, that all which has been said,—and truly said,—of the excellence of our institutions, if administered by an upright people, must be reversed and read backwards, if administered by a corrupt one? I am aware that some will be ready to say, "we have been unwise and infatuated to confide all the constituents of our social and political welfare, to such irresponsible keeping." But let me ask of such,—of what avail is their lamentation? The irresistible movement in the diffusion of power is still progressive, not retrograde. Every year puts more of social strength into the hands of physical strength. The arithmetic of numbers is more and more excluding all estimate of moral forces, in the administration of government. And this, whether for good or for evil, will continue to be. Human beings cannot be remanded to the dungeons of imbecility, if they are to those of ignorance. The sun can as easily be turned backwards in its course, as one particle of that power,

which has been conferred upon the millions, can be again monopolized by the few. To discuss the question, therefore, whether our institutions are not too free, is, for all practical purposes, as vain as it would be to discuss the question whether, on the whole, it was a wise arrangement on the part of Divine Providence, that the American continent should ever have been created, or that Columbus should have discovered it. And let me ask, further, have those who believe our institutions to be too free, and who, therefore, would go back to less liberal ones,—have they settled the question, how far back they will go? Will they go back to the dark ages, and recall an eclipse which lasted centuries long? or will they ascend a little higher for their models,—to a time when our ancestors wore undressed skins, and burrowed in holes of the earth? or will they strike at once for the institutions of Egypt, where, though the monkey was a god, there was still a sufficient distance between him and his human worshipper? But all such discussions are vain. The oak will as soon go back into the acorn, or the bird into its shell, as we return to the monarchical or aristocratic forms of by-gone ages.

Nor let it be forgotten, in contemplating our condition, that the human passions, as unfolded and invigorated by our institutions, are not only possessed of all the prerogatives, and equipped with all the implements of sovereignty; but that they are forever roused and spurred to the most vehement efforts. It is a law of the passions, that they exert strength in proportion to the causes which excite them,—a law which holds true in cases of sanity, as well as in the terrible strength of insanity. And with what endless excitements are the passions of men here plied! With us, the Press is such a clarion, that it proclaims all the great movements of this great country, with

a voice that sweeps over its whole surface, and comes back to us in echoes from its extremest borders. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Lakes to the Gulf, men cheer, inflame, exasperate each other, as though they were neighbors in the same street. What the ear of Dionysius was to him, making report of every word uttered by friend or foe, our institutions have made this land to every citizen. It is a vast sounding gallery; and, from horizon to horizon every shout of triumph and every cry of alarm are gathered up and rung in every man's dwelling. All objects which stimulate the passions of men, are made to pass before the eyes of all, as in a circling panorama. In very truth we are all hung upon the same electrical wire, and if the ignorant and vicious get possession of the apparatus, the intelligent and the virtuous must take such shocks as the stupid or profligate experimenters may choose to administer.

Mark how the excitements which our institutions supply, have wrought upon the love of gain and the love of place. Vast speculations,—such as in other countries would require not only royal sanctions and charters, but the equipment of fleets, and princely outfits of gold and arms,—are here rushed into, on flash paper, by clerks and apprentices, not out of their time. What party can affirm that it is exempt from members who prize office, rather than the excellence that deserves it? *Where* can I be,—not *what* can I be,—is the question suggested to aspirants for fame. How many have their eyes fixed upon posts of honor and emolument which but one only can fill. While few will be satisfied with occupying less than their portion of space in the public eye, thousands have marked out some great compartment of the sky for the blazonry of their names. And hence it is, that, wherever there is a signal of gain, or

of power, the vultures of cupidity and of ambition darken the air. Young men launch into this tumultuous life, years earlier than has ever been witnessed elsewhere. They seek to win those prizes without delay, which, according to nature's ordinances and appointments, are the rewards of a life of labor. Hence they find no time for studying the eternal principles of justice, veracity, equality, benevolence, and for applying them to the complicated affairs of men. What cares a young adventurer for the immutable laws of trade, when he has purchased a ticket in some lottery of speculation, from which he expects to draw a fortune? Out of such an unbridled, unchastened love of gain, whether it traffics in townships of land or in twopenny toys, do we not know beforehand, there will come infinite falsehoods, knavery and bankruptcy? Let this state of things continue, and he will be a happy man who dares to say of any article of food or of apparel, which he eats or wears, that it has not, at some period of its preparation, or in some of its transfers, been contaminated by fraud. And what a state of society would it argue, in other respects, if the people at large should ever become indifferent to the question, whether fraud be, or be not, inwoven into the texture, and kneaded into the substance of what they daily consume,—whether what they eat or drink or wear be not an embodiment of the spirit of lies!

So the inordinate love of office will present the spectacle of gladiatorial contests,—of men struggling for station as for life, and using against each other the poisonous weapons of calumny and vituperation;—while the abiding welfare, the true greatness and prosperity of the people will be like the soil of some neutral Flanders, over which the hostile bands of partisans will march and countermarch, and convert it into battle-fields,—so that,

whichever side may triumph, the people will be ruined. And even after one cause or one party has prevailed, the conquered land will not be wide enough to settle a tithe of the conquerors upon. Hence must come new rallyings; new banners must be unfurled, and the repose of the land be again broken by the convulsions of party strife. Hence, too, the death-grapple between the defenders of institutions which ought to be abolished, and the assailants of institutions which ought to be preserved. Laocoön cries, "My life and my children are mine." The hissing and enwreathing serpents respond, "They are ours." If each party espouses and supports whatever is wrong on its own side, because such a course is deemed necessary to union and strength; and denounces whatever is right in the plans of its antagonists, because such are the approved tactics of opposition; if each party sounds the loudest alarms, when the most trivial danger from its opponents is apprehended, and sings the gentlest lullabies over perils of its own producing, can seer or prophet foretell but one catastrophe?

Again; we hear good men, every day, bemoaning the *ignorance* of certain portions of our country, and of individuals in all parts of it. The use often made of the elective franchise, the crude, unphilosophical notions, sometimes advanced in our legislative halls on questions of political economy, the erroneous views entertained by portions of the people, respecting the relation between representative and constituent, and the revolutionary ideas of others in regard to the structure of civil society,—these are cited as specimens and proofs of the *ignorance* that abounds amongst us. No greater delusion can blind us. This much-lamented ignorance, in the cases supposed, is a phantom, a spectre. The outcry against it is a false alarm, diverting attention from a real to an imaginary danger. Ignorance is not the cause of

the evils referred to. With exceptions comparatively few, we have but two classes of ignorant persons amongst us, and they are harmless. Infants and idiots are ignorant; few others are so. Those whom we are accustomed to call ignorant, are full of false notions, as much worse than ignorance as wisdom is better. A merely ignorant man has no skill in adapting means to ends, whereby to jeopard the welfare of great interests or great numbers. Ignorance is blankness; or, at most, a lifeless, inert mass, which can, indeed, be moved and placed where you please, but will stay where it is placed. In Europe, there are multitudes of ignorant men,—men into whose minds no idea ever entered respecting the duties of society or of government, or the conditions of human prosperity. They, like their work-fellows, the cattle, are obedient to their masters; and the range of their ideas on political or social questions, is hardly more extensive than that of the brutes. But with our institutions, this state of things, to any great extent, is impossible. The very atmosphere we breathe is freighted with the ideas of property, of acquisition and transmission; of wages, labor and capital; of political and social rights; of the appointment to, and tenure of offices; of the reciprocal relations between the great departments of government—executive, legislative, and judicial. Every native-born child amongst us imbibes notions, either false or true, on these subjects. Let these notions be false; let an individual grow up, with false ideas of his own nature and destiny as an immortal being, with false views respecting what government, laws, customs, should be; with no knowledge of the works, or the opinions of those great men who framed our government, and adjusted its various parts to each other; —and when such an individual is invested with the political rights of citizenship, with power to

give an authoritative voice and vote upon the affairs of his country, he will look upon all existing things as rubbish which it is his duty to sweep away, that he may have room for the erection of other structures, planned after the model of his own false ideas. No man that ever lived could, by mere intuition or instinct, form just opinions upon a thousand questions, pertaining to civil society, to its jurisprudence, its local, national and international duties. Many truths, vital to the welfare of the people, differ in their reality, as much from the appearances which they present to uninstructed minds, as the apparent size of the sun differs from its real size, which, in truth, is so many thousand times larger than the earth, while to the untaught eye it appears to be so many thousand times smaller. And if the human propensities are here to manifest themselves through the enlarged means of false knowledge which our institutions, unaided by special instruction, will furnish; if they are to possess all the instruments and furtherances which our doctrine of political equality confers; then the result must be, a power to do evil almost infinitely greater than ever existed before, instigated by impulses proportionately strong. Hence our dangers are to be, not those of ignorance, which would be comparatively tolerable, but those of false knowledge, which transcend the powers of mortal imagination to portray. Would you appreciate the amazing difference between ignorance and false knowledge, look at France, before and during her great revolution. Before the revolution, her people were merely ignorant; during the revolution, they acted under the lights of false knowledge. An idiot is ignorant, and does little harm; a maniac has false ideas, and destroys, burns and murders.

Looking again at the nature of our institutions, we find that it is not the material or corporeal

interests of man alone, that are here decided by the common voice;—such, for instance, as those pertaining to finance, revenue, the adjustment of the great economical interests of society, the rival claims between agriculture, commerce and manufactures, the partition and distribution of legislative, judicial and executive powers, with a long catalogue of others of a kindred nature; but also those more solemn questions which pervade the innermost sanctuary of domestic life, and, for worship or for sacrilege, enter the Holy of Holies in the ark of society:—these also are submitted to the general arbitrament. The haughty lordling, whose heart never felt one throb for the welfare of mankind, gives vote and verdict on the extent of popular rights; the libertine and debauchee give vote and verdict on the sanctity of the marriage covenant; the atheist on the definition of blasphemy. Nor is this great people invited merely to speculate, and frame abstract theories, on these momentous themes; to make picture models, on paper, in their closets; they are not invited to sketch Republics of Fancy only, but they are commissioned to make Republics of Fact; and in such Republics as they please to make, others, perforce, must please to live. If I do not like my minister, or my parish, I can *sign off*, (as we term it,) and connect myself with another; if I do not like my town, I can move out of it; but where shall a man sign to, or move to, out of a bad world? Nor do our people hold these powers, as an ornament merely, as some ostensible but useless badge of Freedom; but they keep them as instruments for use, and sometimes wield them as weapons of revenge. So closely indeed are we inwoven in the same web of fate, that a vote given on the banks of the Missouri or Arkansas, may shake every plantation and warehouse on the Atlantic, and, reaching seaward, overtake

and baffle enterprise, into whatever oceans it may have penetrated.

Such, then, is our condition. The minds that are to regulate all things and govern all things, in this country, are innately strong; they are intensely stimulated; they are supplied with the most formidable artillery of means; and each one is authorized to form its own working-plan, its own ground-scheme, according to which, when the social edifice has been taken to pieces, it is to be reconstructed;—some are for going back a thousand or two thousand years for their model; others, for introducing what they consider the millennium, at once, by force of law, or by force without law.

And now, my friends, I ask, with the deepest anxiety, what institutions exist amongst us, which at once possess the power and are administered with the efficiency, requisite to save us from the dangers that spring up in our own bosoms? That the propensities, which each generation brings into the world, possess terrific power, and are capable of inflicting the completest ruin, none can deny. Nor will it be questioned that amongst *us*, they have an open career, and a command of means, such as never before coëxisted. What antagonist power have we provided against them? By what exorcism can we lay the spirits we have raised? Once, brute force, directed by a few men, trampled upon the many. Here, the many are the possessors of that very force, and have almost abolished its use as a means of government. The French *gendarmerie*, the British horse-guards, the dreadful punishment of the Siberian mines, will never be copied here. Should the government resort to a standing army, that army would consist of the very forces they dread, organized, equipped and officered.

Can laws save us? With us, the very idea of legislation is reversed. Once, the law prescribed the actions and shaped the wills of the multitude; here, the wills of the multitude prescribe and shape the law. With us, legislators study the will of the multitude, just as natural philosophers study a volcano,—not with any expectation of doing aught to the volcano, but to see what the volcano is about to do to them. While the law was clothed with majesty and power, and the mind of the multitude was weak, then, as in all cases of a conflict between unequal forces, the law prevailed. But now, when the law is weak, and the passions of the multitude have gathered irresistible strength, it is fallacious and insane to look for security in the moral force of the law. As well might the man who has erected his dwelling upon the verge of a cliff overhanging the deep, when the equilibrium of the atmosphere is destroyed, and the elements are on fire, and every billow is excavating his foundations, expect to still the tempest by reading the Riot-act. Government and law, which ought to be the allies of justice and the everlasting foes of violence and wrong, will here be moulded into the similitude of the public mind, and will answer to it, as, in water, face answereth to face.

But, if arms themselves would be beaten in such a contest, if those who should propose the renewal of ancient severities in punishment, would themselves be punished, have we not some other resource for the security of moderation and self-denial, and for the supremacy of order and law? Have not the scholars who adorn the halls of learning, and woo almost a hallowed serenity to dwell in their academic shades,—have they not, amongst all the languages which they speak, some tongue by which they can charm and pacify the mighty spirits we have evoked into being?

Alas! while scholars and academists are earnestly debating such questions, as whether the *name* of error, shall or shall not be spelled with the letter *u*, the *soul* of error becomes incarnate, and starts up, as from the earth, myriad-formed and ubiquitous, and stands by the side of every man, and whispers transgression into his ear, and, like the first Tempter, entices him to pluck the beautiful, but fatal fruit of some forbidden tree. Our ancestors seem to have had great faith that the alumni of our colleges would diffuse a higher order of intelligence through the whole mass of the people, and would imbue them with a love of sobriety and a reverence for justice. But either the leaven has lost its virtue, or the lump has become too large; for, surely, in our day, the mass is not all leavened.

I speak with reverence of the labors of another profession, in their sacred calling. No other country in the world has ever been blessed with a body of clergymen, so learned, so faithful, so devout as ours. But by traditionary custom and the ingrained habits of the people, the efforts of the clergy are mainly expended upon those who have passed the forming state;—upon adults, whose characters, as we are accustomed to express it, have become *fixed*, which being interpreted, means, that they have passed from fluid into flint. Look at the ablest pastor, in the midst of an adult congregation whose early education has been neglected. Though he be consumed of zeal, and ready to die of toil, in their behalf, yet I seem to see him, expending his strength and his years amongst them, like one solitary arborist working, single-handed and alone, in a wide forest, where there are hundreds of stooping and contorted trees, and he, striving with tackle and guy-ropes to undouble their convolutions, and to straighten the flexures in trunks whose fibres

curled as they grew; and, with his naked hand, to coax out gnarls and nodosities hard enough to glance off lightning;—when, could he have guided and trained them while yet they were tender shoots and young saplings, he could have shaped them into beauty, a hundred in a day.

But perhaps others may look for security to the public Press, which has now taken its place amongst the organized forces of modern civilization. Probably its political department supplies more than half the reading of the mass of our people. But, bating the point, whether, in times of public excitement, when the sobriety and thoughtfulness of wisdom, when severe and exact truth are, more than ever else, necessary,—whether, at such times, the press is not itself liable to be inflamed by the heats it should allay, and to be perverted by the obliquities it should rectify;—bating this point, it is still obvious that its principal efforts are expended upon one department only of all our social duties. The very existence of the newspaper press, for any useful purpose, presupposes that the people are already supplied with the elements of knowledge and inspired with the love of right; and are therefore prepared to decide, with intelligence and honesty, those complicated and conflicting claims, which the tide of events is constantly presenting, and which, by the myriad messengers of the press, are carried to every man's fireside for his adjudication. For, of what value is it, that we have the most wisely-framed government on earth; to what end is it, that the wisest schemes which a philanthropic statesmanship can devise, are propounded to the people, if this people has not the intelligence to understand, or the integrity to espouse them? Each of two things is equally necessary to our political prosperity; namely, just principles of government and administration, on one side, and a people able to understand and

resolute to uphold them, on the other. Of what use is the most exquisite music ever composed by the greatest masters of the art, until you have orchestra or choir that can perform the pieces? Pupils must thoroughly master the vocal elements, musical language must be learned, voices must be long and severely trained, or the divinest compositions of Haydn or Mozart would only set the teeth of an auditory on edge. And so must it be with our government and laws;—the best will be useless, unless we have a people who will appreciate and uphold them.

Again, then, I ask, with unmitigated anxiety, what institutions we now possess, that can furnish defence or barrier against the action of those propensities, which each generation brings into the world as a part of its being; and which our institutions foster and stimulate into unparalleled activity and vigor? Can any Christian man believe, that God has so constituted and so governs the human race, that it is always and necessarily to be suicidal of its earthly welfare? No! the thought is impious. The same Almighty power which implants in our nature the germs of these terrible propensities, has endowed us also, with reason and conscience and a sense of responsibility to Him; and, in his providence, he has opened a way by which these nobler faculties can be elevated into dominion and supremacy over the appetites and passions. But if this is ever done, it must be mainly done, during the docile and teachable years of childhood. I repeat it, my friends, *if this is ever done, it must be mainly done, during the docile and teachable years of childhood.* Wretched, incorrigible, demoniac, as any human being may ever have become, there was a time when he took the first step in error and in crime; when, for the first time, he just nodded to his fall, on the brink of ruin. Then,

ere he was irrecoverably lost, ere he plunged into the abyss of infamy and guilt, he might have been recalled, as it were by the waving of the hand. Fathers, mothers, patriots, Christians! it is this very hour of peril through which our children are now passing. They know it not, but we know it; and where the knowledge is, there rests the responsibility. Society is responsible;—not society considered as an abstraction, but society as it consists of living members, which members we are. Clergymen are responsible;—all men who have enjoyed the opportunities of a higher education in colleges and universities are responsible, for they can convert their means, whether of time or of talent, into instruments for elevating the masses of the people. The conductors of the public press are responsible, for they have daily access to the public ear, and can infuse just notions of this high duty into the public mind. Legislators and rulers are responsible. In our country, and in our times, no man is worthy the honored name of a statesman, who does not include the highest practicable education of the people in all his plans of administration. He may have eloquence, he may have a knowledge of all history, diplomacy, jurisprudence; and by these he might claim, in other countries, the elevated rank of a statesman; but, unless he speaks, plans, labors, at all times and in all places, for the culture and edification of the whole people, he is not, he cannot be, an American statesman.

If this dread responsibility for the fate of our children be disregarded, how, when called upon, in the great eventful day, to give an account of the manner in which our earthly duties have been discharged, can we expect to escape the condemnation: "Inasmuch as ye have not done it to one of the least of these, ye have not done it unto me?"

LECTURE IV.

1840.

LECTURE IV.

WHAT GOD DOES, AND WHAT HE LEAVES FOR MAN TO DO, IN THE WORK OF EDUCATION.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:

With the coming of another year, I come to you again, asking and offering sympathy for the welfare of our children.

When I last had the pleasure of meeting a convention of the friends of Common Schools in this county, I addressed them on the subject of the *Necessity of Education*, under a government and with institutions like our own. I endeavored to demonstrate, that here, in our country and in our age, the enlightenment of the intellect, and the cultivation of the affections of the rising generation, had not been left *optional* with us, but made *indispensable;* that the efficient and thorough education of the young was not merely *commended* to us, as a means of promoting private and public welfare, but *commanded*, as the only safeguard against such a variety and extent of calamities as no nation on earth has ever suffered.

The argument, in brief, ran thus:—All men are born into the world with many appetites and propensities of a purely animal and selfish nature. Some of these appetites and propensities are necessary to the existence of the individual, and therefore they adhere to him and remain a part of him as long as he lives; others are necessary to the continuance of the race, and therefore we must expect that they will be reproduced with every new-born generation, to the end of time. Each individual, for instance,

brings into the world, and carries through it, an appetite for food; and this appetite perpetually tends to an excess ruinous to health and fatal to life,—among the vulgar running into the coarseness of gluttony,—among the refined to a no less injurious epicurism. Each individual brings into the world, and carries through it, an appetite for beverage; and what multitudes has this desire stretched upon the "burning marle" of Intemperance! All are born with a love of wealth, or, at least, of acquisition, which leads to wealth;—and we should be unfit to live in such a world as this is, without such an innate tendency; because, in health, we must lay by something for sickness, and in the strength of manhood, something for the helplessness of children, and for the feebleness of old age. Yet how easily does this propensity run out into avarice and cupidity, leading on to fraud, robbery, rapine, and all the enormities of the slave-trade, the opium-trade, and the rum-trade. So we all have a desire for the good-will of others,—an instinct beautifully adapted to diffuse pleasure over all the intercourse of life. But in this country, where the rule once was that the honors of office should be awarded to merit,—*detur digniori*,—the sign seems to have been mistaken for the thing signified; and now, whenever there is an office to be filled, a crowd of applicants throng around, more than sufficient, *in point of numbers*, to fill the vacancy for the next thousand years. Again, a certain feeling of self-estimation is absolutely essential to us all; because, without it, every man would be awed into annihilation before the majesty of the multitude, or the glories of the visible universe. But how readily does this feeling of self-importance burst out into pride and a love of domination, and that intolerance towards the opinions of others, which does not seek to enlighten

or persuade, but dogmatizes, denounces, and persecutes.

All history cries out, with all her testimonies and her admonitions, proclaiming to what excesses these innate and universal appetites may grow, when supplied with opportunities and incitements for indulgence. If men consult their propensities alone, no sacrifice ever seems too great to purchase indulgence for the lowest and meanest of them all. Each one of them is not only capable of unlimited growth, but each, also, is blind to all consequences, and demands gratification, though the next hour brings perdition as the penalty. We need not go back to patriarchal or primeval times to find a man who, because he was hungry or thirsty, would barter a glorious inheritance for a mess of pottage; or a woman who would forfeit paradise through curiosity to taste an apple. When the political destiny of his family and of all France depended upon the speed which Louis XVI. should make in his flight from Paris, he paused by the way-side to drink a bottle of Burgundy,—said coolly, that it was the best bottle he ever drank,—and suffered the scale which held the fortunes of twenty-five millions of people, *to turn, irrevocably*, while he prolonged his gustations. To add a few more items to his inventory of conquered nations, Napoleon snatched the scythe from the hand of Death, and, forerunning the great Destroyer, he strowed the earth, from torrid sands to Arctic snows, with the corses of human slain, mowed down in the morning beauty and vigor of life; and, rather than not to be emperor at all, he would have reigned the emperor of a European solitude. He played the game of war, as he played his favorite game of chess,—for the sake of triumph,—making no more account of nations than of pawns. Pope Innocent III, founded an Inquisition, modelled after the plan of Pandemonium,

that he might compel mankind to acknowledge the infallibility of his dogmas. Notwithstanding the manifest intentions of nature in making the sexes almost numerically equal, the Sultan culls nations to fill his seraglio with beauty. Did not Mark Anthony forget his hard-earned fame, perfidiously abandon his faithful troops, and shut his eyes upon the vision of a kingdom, for a transient hour of voluptuousness in the arms of Cleopatra? Herod hears that a man-child is born in Judea, who may one day endanger his throne; and forthwith, to avert that possible event, he murders all the male children in the land under two years of age; and the moment power was given, a woman, to avenge a private pique, brings in the head of John the Baptist in a charger. Even good men,—those for whose steadfastness we would almost be willing to pledge our lives,—exemplify the terrible strength of the propensities. Moses rebels; David murders; Peter, although forewarned, yet denies his Master, and forswears himself.

Now, the germs or elements of these propensities belong to us all. We possess them at birth; they abide with us till death. Vast differences exist in the power which they exert over men, owing to differences in their innate vigor; still greater differences, perhaps, result from early education. In bad men they predominate, and break out into the commission of as much iniquity as finite beings, with limited means, can compass. They exist also in good men; but, in them, they are either feebly developed, or they are bound and leashed in by pure and holy affections. By nature, there were boiling seas of passion in the breasts of Socrates and of Washington; but godlike sentiments of justice and duty and benevolence kept down their rage, as the deep granite beneath New England's soil keeps down the cen-

tral fires of the globe, and forbids earthquake or volcano to agitate her surface. When subordinated to conscience and the will of God, these propensities give ardor to our zeal and strength to our exertions; just as the genius of man converts wind and fire from destroyers into servants.

From our very constitution, then, there is a downward gravitation forever to be overcome. The perpetual bias of our instincts is, from competency and temperance to luxury and inebriation; from frugality to avarice; from honest earnings to fraudulent gains; from a laudable desire of reputation, and a reasonable self-estimate, to unhallowed ambition, and a determination to usurp the prerogative of God by writing our creeds on other men's souls. Hence these propensities require some mighty counterpoise to balance their proclivity to wrong. They must be governed,—either by the pressure of outward force, or by the supremacy of inward principle. In other countries and ages, external force,—the civil executioner, Pretorian cohorts, Janizaries, standing armies, an established priesthood,—have kept them down. The propensities and appetites of a few men have overlaid and smothered those of the rest. A few men, whom we call tyrants and monsters, having got the mastery, have prevented thousands of others from being tyrants and monsters like themselves. And although it is with entire justice that we charge the despotisms of the old world with having dwarfed and crippled whatever is great and noble in human nature; yet it is equally true that they have dwarfed and crippled, in an equal degree, whatever is injurious and base. The Neros and Napoleons have prevented others from being Neros and Napoleons, as well as from becoming Senecas and Howards.

But with the changed institutions of this country, all is changed. Here history may be said, in

familiar phrase, not merely to have turned over a new leaf, but to have opened a new set of books. With our Revolution, the current of human events was turned quite round, and set upon a new course. That external power which, theretofore, had palsied the propensities of the mass, was abolished. Instead of the old axiom, that the ruler is a lord, —a vicegerent of God,—here, to a proverb, rulers are servants. Lightly and fearfully the law lays its hand upon men; and, should the wisest law ever framed, chafe the passions or propensities of the majority, or of men who can muster a majority, they speak and the law perishes. The will of the people must be our law, whether that will reads the moral code forwards or backwards.

Now, for one moment, compare the collected vastness of men's desires, with the sum of the world's resources. Compare the demand with the supply, where the propensities are the customers. Suppose the wealth of this country were divided into fifteen million equal parts, and each man were allowed to subscribe for what number of shares he might please; how many, think you, would have subscribed, before it would be announced that all the stock had been taken up? Had each man permission to drop a folded ballot into the urn of fate, designating the rank and the office which he and his children should hold, would not the nominal aristocracy be tremendous? Were each religious dogmatist and bigot authorized to write out articles of faith for universal adoption, what a mad-house of creeds and theological systems would there be! But this is endless. All know, if every holder of a lottery ticket could name the amount of his prize, how soon the office would be bankrupt.

Now the simple question for an American, is, whether all this mighty accession of power, growing out of our free institutions, shall or shall not

be placed in the hands of these ravenous and tyrannizing propensities.

From this view of the subject it is obvious, that we may become just as much worse than any other nation that ever existed, as the founders of our institutions hoped we should be better. If the propensities are to prevail, then speculation will supersede industry; violence will usurp the prerogatives of the law; the witness will be perjured upon the stand, and the guilty be rescued by forsworn jurors; the grand council-halls of the nation will be converted from an Areopagus of wise and reverend men, into a gladiatorial ring; the depositaries of public and of private trusts will administer them for personal ends; not only individuals but States will become reckless of their obligations; elections will be decided by bribery and corruption; and the newspaper press, which scatters its sheets over the country, thick as snow-flakes in a wintry storm, will justify whatever is wrong, on one side, and vilify whatever is right on the other, until nothing that is right will be left on either. Ay, my friends, if you put your ear to the ground, can you not hear, even now, the sappers and miners at their work?

Even in the present state of society, and with all our boastings of civilization and Christianity, if all men were certain that they could, with entire impunity, indulge their wishes for a single night, what a world would be revealed to us in the morning! Should all selfish desires at once burst their confines, and swell to the extent of their capacity, it would be as though each drop of the morning dew were suddenly enlarged into an ocean.

Does any possessor of wealth, or leisure, or learning, ask, "What interest have I in the education of the multitude?" I reply; you have at least this interest, that, unless their minds are

enlightened by knowledge and controlled by virtuous principle, there is not, between their appetites and all you hold dear upon earth, so much as the defence of a spider's web. Without a sense of the inviolability of property, your deeds are but waste-paper. Without a sense of the sacredness of person and life, you are only a watch-dog whose baying is to be silenced, that your house may be more securely entered and plundered. Even a guilty few can destroy the peace of the virtuous many. One incendiary can burn faster than a thousand industrious workmen can build;—and this is as true of social rights as of material edifices.

Had God, then, provided no means by which this part of our nature can be controlled, we should indeed say, that we had been lifted up to heaven in point of privileges, that we might, so much the more certainly, be dashed in pieces by our inevitable fall.

But we have not been inexorably subjected to such a doom. If it befalls us, it befalls us with our own consent. Means of escape are vouchsafed; and not of escape only, but of infinite peace and joy.

The world is to be rescued through physical, intellectual, moral and religious action upon the young. I say, *upon the young*, for the number of grown men who ever change character for the better, is far too small to lay the foundation of any hope of a general reform. After the age of twenty-five,—or even after that of twenty-one years,—few men commence a course of virtue or abandon one of vice;—and even when this is done, its cause almost invariably dates back to some early impression, which for many years has lain dormant in the mind. Let that period be passed, and, ordinarily, you must wait for a death-bed repentance; and often, will your waiting be in vain even for that. By the time the age

of manhood has been reached, the course of life has usually acquired a momentum which propels it onwards, substantially in the same direction, to its close.

Now for the great end of ransoming the human race from its brutish instincts and its demoniac indulgences, let us see what the benevolence of God does for us, in the common course of nature and providence, and what His wisdom has left for us to do;—because it is obvious, that He may go on doing his part of the work, for a hundred, or for a thousand generations, and yet, unless we also do our part, the work never will be done. And it may be further remarked, that while He does His part, and we neglect ours, the work, so far from being half done, will be worse than undone. Our folly perverting His goodness will be like an unskilful hand operating upon an exquisitely wrought machine. But His part of the work,—that is, the general course of nature and providence,—will go on, whether we coöperate or oppose. It is not for us, therefore, to say with the Psalmist, "Awake! why sleepest *Thou*, O Lord!" for it is not the Lord who sleeps, but it is we ourselves.

The general truth here stated, may find its illustrations and analogies in all the departments of nature. I will give only a single example.

The husbandman is promised that seed-time and harvest shall not fail; and, in pursuance of that promise, the fountains of the clouds are opened to saturate the earth with fatness; the sun shoots a genial warmth into the soil, and the rich mould and the richer atmosphere are ready for a magical transformation into verdure and flowers and fruit;—but unless the husbandman knows how to scatter the seed at the right time, and to cultivate the tender plant in the right way, in vain shall the fields be visited by the reapers.

For all Africa and for all Asia, nature has done her part of the work, for thousands of years; and yet the miserable generations rise and suffer and perish, like so many swarms of insects on the banks of the Nile or the Ganges. Nor does nature show any symptoms of impatience at their delay;—with awful tranquillity, she waits for their part of the work to be done.

The first thing done for us, in the course of nature and providence, is the creation of children in a state of entire ignorance and receptiveness. Were children born with characters full-formed, —with minds inflexibly made up on all possible subjects, and armed at all points for their defence;—were babes, as soon as they can speak, to start up into ferocious partisans and fanatics,—then nature would have done the whole work, and left nothing for us to do;—nay, in that case, she would have rendered it impossible for us to interfere, to any practical purpose. But it depends hardly less upon the language of the household, which of all the tongues upon earth, the child shall most readily speak, than it does upon the opinions of the household, what opinions, on a great variety of the most important subjects, he shall adopt. Hence we find, almost without exception, the children of Pagans to be Pagans; of Mahommedans, Mahommedans; and of Catholics and Protestants, to be respectively, Catholics and Protestants. It depends upon residence in a particular latitude and longitude, what natural objects a child shall become acquainted with; and one who is born in the frigid zone will be as little accustomed to the social habits as to the natural productions of the torrid. And finally, it depends upon the examples and the institutions, amidst which a child is reared, what shall be his earliest, and probably his most enduring impressions, respecting the great realities of existence.

Here, then, is an ample sphere for the exertion of our influence. We should transfuse our best sentiments, transplant our best ideas and habits, into the receptive soul of childhood. It is our duty to separate the right from the wrong, in our own minds and conduct, and to incorporate the former only in the minds and conduct of children. Then the force of habit will aid them in doing those duties, whose performance, in our own case, habit may have opposed. It is an admirable proverb which says, "Happy is the man whose habits are his friends." Could we ever know that we are infallibly right on all the great questions which pertain to our temporal and eternal destiny, then it might be our duty to inculcate our views authoritatively and dogmatically upon children, and to insist upon their acquiescence and conformity; but as we can never know in this life, with absolute and positive certainty, that we are right on such mighty themes, it becomes our first and highest duty to awaken in their hearts the sentiment of truth, to inculcate the love and the pursuit of it, wherever it may be found, and to teach them to abandon everything else, even their own most cherished opinions for its sake. That is the worst of sacrilege which creates a belief in a child's soul that any opinion is better than truth.

The entire helplessness of children, for a long period after birth, is another circumstance not within our control, and one deserving of great moral consideration. In one respect, children may be said to possess their greatest power, at this, the feeblest period of their existence;—a power which,—however paradoxical it may seem,—originates in helplessness, and therefore diminishes just in proportion as they gain strength. It was most beautifully said by Dr. Thomas Brown, that after a child has grown to manhood,

"he cannot, even then, by the most imperious orders, which he addresses to the most obsequious slaves, exercise an authority more commanding than that, which, in the very first hours of his life, when a few indistinct cries and tears were his only language, he exercised irresistibly over hearts, of the very existence of which he was ignorant." It may be added that, under no terror of a despot's rage; under no bribe of honors or of wealth; under no fear of torture or of death, have greater struggles been made, or greater sacrifices endured, than for those helpless creatures, who, for all purposes of immediate availability, are so utterly worthless. All, unless it be the lowest savages, fly to the succor, and melt at the sufferings of infancy. God has so adapted their unconscious pleadings to our uncontrollable impulses, that they, in their weakness, have the prerogative of command, and we, in our strength, the instinct of obedience. It was the highest wisdom, then, not to intrust the fate of infancy to any volitions or notions of expediency, on our part; but, at once, by a sovereign law of the constitution, to make our knowledge and power submissive to their inarticulate commands.

In proportion as this power of helplessness wanes, the child begins to excite our interest and sympathy, by a thousand personal attractions and forms of loveliness. The sweetness of lips that never told a lie; the smile that celebrates the first-born emotions of love; the intense gaze at bright colors and striking forms, gathering together the elements from whose full splendor and gorgeousness, Raphael painted and Homer wrote; the plastic imagination, fusing the solid substances of the earth, to be re-cast into shapes of beauty;—what Rothschild, what Crœsus has wealth that can purchase these!

How cheap and how beautiful, too, are the joys

of childhood! Paley, in speaking of the evidences of the goodness of God, says, there is always some "bright spot in the prospect;"—some "single example," "by which each man finds himself more convinced than by all others put together. I seem, for my own part," he adds, "to see the benevolence of the Deity more clearly in the pleasures of young children, than in any thing in the world. The pleasures of grown persons may be reckoned partly of their own procuring, especially if there has been any industry, or contrivance, or pursuit to come at them; or, if they are founded, like music, painting, &c., upon any qualifications of their own acquiring. But the pleasures of a healthy infant, are so manifestly provided for it by another, and the benevolence of the provision is so unquestionable, that every child I see at its sport, affords to my mind, a kind of sensible evidence of the finger of God, and of the disposition which directs it." At the age of two or three years, before a child has ever seen a jest-book, whence comes his glad and gladdening laughter,—at once costless and priceless? Whence comes that flow of joy, that gurgles and gushes up from his heart, like water flung from a spouting-spring? That bright-haired boy, how came he as full of music and poetry as a singing-book? Who imprisoned a dancing-school in each of his toes, which sends him from the earth with bounding and rebounding step? What an Æolian harp the wind finds in him! Nor music alone, does it awaken in his bosom; for, let but its feathery touch play upon his locks, or fan his cheek, and gravitation lets go of him,—he floats and sails away, as though his body were a feather and his soul the zephyr that played with it. Indeed, half his discords come, because the winds, the buds, the flowers, the light,—so many fingers of the hand of nature,—are all striving to play

different tunes upon him, at the same time. These delights are born of the exquisite workmanship of the Creator, before the ignorance and wickedness of men have had time to mar it;—and they flow out spontaneously and unconsciously, like a bird's song, or a flower's beauty.

Even to those who have no children of their own,—unless they are, as the apostle expresses it, "without natural affection,"—even to those, the wonderful growth of a child, in knowledge, in power, in affection, makes all other wonders tame. Who ever saw a wretch so heathenish, so dead, that the merry song or shout of a group of gleeful children, did not galvanize the misanthrope into an exclamation of joy? What orator or poet has eloquence that enters the soul with such quick and subtle electricity, as a child's tear of pity for suffering, or his frown of indignation at wrong? A child is so much more than a miracle that its growth and future blessedness are the only things worth working miracles for. God did not make the child for the sake of the earth, nor for the sake of the sun; but he made the earth and the sun, as a footstool and a lamp, to sustain his steps and to enlighten his path, during a few only of the earliest years of his immortal existence.

You perceive, my friends, that in speaking of the loveliness of children, and their power to captivate and subdue all hearts to a willing bondage, I have used none but masculine pronouns,—referring only to the stronger and hardier sex;—for, by what glow and melody of speech, can I sketch the vision of a young and beautiful daughter, with all her bewildering enchantments? By what cunning art can the coarse material of words be refined and subtilized into color, and motion, and music, till they shall paint her bloom of health, "celestial, rosy red;" till they shall trace those motions that have the grace and the

freedom of flame, and echo the sweet and affectionate tones of a spirit, yet warm from the hand that created it? What less than a divine power could have strung the living chords of her voice to pour out unbidden and exulting harmonies? What fount of sacred flame kindles and feeds the light that gleams from the pure depths of her eye, and flushes her cheek with the hues of a perpetual morning, and shoots auroras from her beaming forehead? O! profane not this last miracle of heavenly workmanship with sight or sound of earthly impurity. Keep vestal vigils around her inborn modesty; and let the quickest lightnings blast her tempter. She is Nature's *mosaic* of charms. Looked upon as we look upon an object in Natural History,—upon a gazelle or a hyacinth,—she is a magnet to draw pain out of a wounded breast. While we gaze upon her, and press her in ecstasy to our bosom, we almost tremble, lest suddenly she should unfurl a wing and soar to some better world. But, my friends, with what emotions ought we to tremble, when our thoughts pass from the present to the future,—when we ponder on the possibilities of evil as well as of good, which now, all unconsciously to herself, lie hidden in her spirit's coming history,—now hidden, but to be revealed soon as her tiny form shall have expanded to the stature, and her spirit to the power of womanhood? When we reflect, on the one hand, that this object, almost of our idolatry, may go through life, solacing distress, ministering to want, redeeming from guilt, making vice mourn the blessedness it has lost because it was not virtue; and, as she walks, holy and immaculate before God and before men, some aërial anthem shall seem to be forever hymning peaceful benedictions around her; or, on the other hand, that, from the dark fountains of a corrupted heart, she shall send forth a secret,

subtle poison, compared with which all earthly venoms are healthful;—when we reflect that, so soon, she may become one or the other of all this, the pen falls, the tongue falters and fails, while the hopeful, fearful heart rushes from thanksgiving to prayer, and from prayer to thanksgiving.

But the most striking and wonderful provision which is made, in the accustomed course of nature and providence, for the welfare of children, remains to be mentioned. Reflect, for a moment, my friends, how it has come to pass, that the successive generations of children, from Adam to ourselves,—each one of which was wholly incapable of providing for itself for a single day,—how has it come to pass, that these successive generations have been regularly sustained and continued to the present day, without intermission or failure? The Creator did not leave these ever-returning exigencies without adequate provision;—for, how universal and how strong is the love of offspring in the parental breast! This love is the grand resource,—the complement of all other forces. We are accustomed to call the right of self-preservation, the first law of nature; yet, how this love of offspring overrules and spurns it. To rescue her child, the mother breaks through a wall of fire, or plunges into the fathomless flood;—or, if it must be consumed in the flames, or lie down in the deep, she clasps it to her bosom and perishes with it. This maternal impulse does not so much subjugate self, as forget that there is any such thing as self; and, were the mother possessed of a thousand lives, for the welfare of her offspring she would squander them all. Mourning, disconsolate mothers, bewailing lost children! Behold the vast procession, which reaches from the earliest periods of the race to those who now stand bending and weeping over the diminutive

graves which swallow up their hopes; and what a mighty attestation do they give to the strength of that instinct which God has implanted in the maternal breast. Nor is it in the human race only that this love of offspring bears sway. All the higher orders of animated nature are subjected to its control. It inspires the most timid races of the brute creation with boldness, and melts the most ferocious of them into love. To express its strength and watchfulness, the hare is said to sleep with ever-open eye on the form where her young repose; and the pelican to tear open her breast with her own beak, and pour out her life-blood to feed her nestlings. The famishing eagle grasps her prey in her talons and carries it to her lofty nest; and though she screams with hunger, yet she will not taste it until her young are satisfied; and the gaunt lioness bears the spoils of the forest to her cavern, nor quenches the fire of her own parched lips until her whelps have feasted. And thus, from the parent stock,—from the Adam and Eve, whether of animals or of men, who came into life full-formed from the hands of their Creator,—down through all successive generations, to the present dwellers upon earth, has this invisible but mighty instinct of the parents' heart, brooded, and held its jealous watch over their young, nurturing their weakness and instructing their ignorance, until the day of their maturity, when it became their turn to reäffirm this great law of nature towards their offspring.

This, my friends, is not sentimentality. It is the contemplation of one of the divinest features in the Economy of Providence. It was for the wisest ends that the Creator ordained, that as the offspring of each, "after its kind," should be brought into life,—then, in that self-same hour, without volition or forethought on their part,—there should flame up in the breast of the parent,

as from the innermost recesses of nature, a new and overmastering impulse,—an impulse which enters the soul like a strong invader, conquering, revolutionizing, transforming old pains into pleasures and old pleasures into pains, until its great mission should be accomplished. On this link the very existence of the races was suspended. Hence Divine foreknowledge made it strong enough to sustain them all;—for, in vain would the fountain of life have been opened in the maternal breast, if a deeper fountain of love had not been opened in her heart.

Would you more adequately conceive what an insupportable wretchedness and torment the rearing of children would be, if, instead of being rendered delightful by these endearments of parental love, it had been merely commanded by law, and enforced by pains and penalties;—would you, I say, more fully conceive this difference;—contrast the feelings of a slave-breeder, (a wretch abhorred by God and man!) contrast, I say, the feelings of a slave-breeder, who raises children for the market, with the feelings of the slave-mother, in whose person this sacred law of parental love is outraged. If one of these doomed children, from what cause soever, becomes puny and sickly, and gives good promise of defeating the cupidity that called it into life, with what bitter emotions does the master behold it! He thinks of investments sunk, of unmerchantable stock on hand, of the profit and loss account; and perhaps he is secretly meditating schemes for preventing further expenditures by bringing the hopeless concern to a violent close. But what an inexpressible joy does the abused mother find in watching over and caressing it, and cheating the hostile hours;—and, (for such is the impartiality of nature,) if she can beguile it of one pain, or win one note of gladness from its sorrow-stricken frame, her dusky bosom thrills with as

keen a rapture as ever dilated the breast of a royal mother, when, beneath a canopy and within curtains of silk and gold, she nursed the heir of a hundred kings.

In civilized and christianized man, this natural instinct is exalted into a holy sentiment. At first, it is true, there springs up this blind passion of parental love, yearning for the good of the child, delighted by its pleasures, tortured by its pains. But this vehement impulse, strong as it is, is not left to do its work alone. It summons and supplicates all the nobler faculties of the soul to become its counsellors and allies. It invokes the aid of conscience; and conscience urges to do all and suffer all, for the child's welfare. For every default, conscience expostulates, rebukes, mourns, threatens, chastises. That is selfishness, and not conscience, in the parent, which says to the child, "You owe your being and your capacities to me." Conscience makes the parent say, "I owe my being and my capacities to you. It is I who have struck out a spark which is to burn with celestial effulgence, or glare with baleful fires. It is I, who have evoked out of nothingness, unknown and incalculable capacities of happiness and of misery; and all that can be done by mortal means is mine to do."

Nor does this love of offspring stop with conscience. It enlists, in its behalf, the general feeling of benevolence,—benevolence, that godlike sentiment which rejoices in the joys and suffers in the sufferings of others. The soul of the truly benevolent man does not seem to reside much in its own body. Its life, to a great extent, is the mere reflex of the lives of others. It migrates into their bodies, and, identifying its existence with their existence, finds its own happiness in increasing and prolonging their pleasures, in extinguishing or solacing their pains. And of all places into

which the whole heart of benevolence ever migrates, it is in the child, where it finds the readiest welcome, and where it loves best to prolong its residence.

So the voice of another sentiment,—a sentiment whose commands are more authoritative than those of any other which ever startles the slumbering faculties from their guilty repose,—I mean the religious sentiment, the sense of duty to God,—this, too, comes in aid of the parental affection; and it appeals to the whole nature, in language awful as that which made the camp of the Israelites tremble, at the foot of Sinai. This sense of duty to God compels the parent to contemplate the child in his moral and religious relations. It says, "However different you may now be from your child,—you strong, and he weak; you learned, and he ignorant; your mind capacious of the mighty events of the past and the future, and he alike ignorant of yesterday and to-morrow,—yet, in a few short years, all this difference will be lost, and one of the greatest remaining differences between yourself and him, will be that which your own conduct towards him shall have caused or permitted. If, then, God is Truth,—if God is Love,—teach the child above all things to seek for Truth, and to abound in Love."

So much, then, my friends, is done, in the common and established course of nature, for the welfare of our children. Nature supplies a perennial force, unexhausted, inexhaustible, reäppearing whenever and wherever the parental relation exists. We, then, who are engaged in the sacred cause of education, are entitled to look upon all parents as having given hostages to our cause; and, just as soon as we can make them see the true relation in which they and their children stand to this cause, they will become advocates for its advancement, more ardent and devoted than

ourselves. We hold every parent by a bond more strong and faithful than promises or oaths,—by a Heaven-established relationship, which no power on earth can dissolve. Would parents furnish us with a record of their secret consciousness, how large a portion of those solemn thoughts and emotions, which throng the mind in the solitude of the night watches, and fill up their hours of anxious contemplation, would be found to relate to the welfare of their offspring. Doubtless the main part of their most precious joys comes from the present or prospective well-being of their children; —and oh! how often would they account all gold as dross, and fame as vanity, and life as nothing, could they bring back the look of the cradle's innocence upon the coffined reprobate!

With some parents, of course, these pleasures and pains constitute a far greater share of the good or ill of life than with others;—and with mothers generally far more than with fathers. We have the evidence of this superior attachment of the mother, in those supernatural energies which she will put forth to rescue her child from danger; we know it by the vigils and fasting she will endure to save it from the pangs of sickness, or to ward off the shafts of death;—when, amid all the allurements of the world, her eye is fastened, and her heart dwells upon but one spot in it; we know it by her agonies, when, at last, she consigns her child to an early grave; we know it by the tear which fills her eye, when, after the lapse of years, some stranger repeats, by chance, its beloved name; and we know it by the crash and ruin of the intellect sometimes produced by the blow of bereavement;—all these are signatures written by the finger of God upon human nature itself, by which we know that parents are constituted and predestined to be the friends of education. They will, they must be its friends, as soon as increasing

intelligence shall have demonstrated to them the indissoluble relation which exists between Education and Happiness.

I have now spoken, my friends, of what is done for us, in the accustomed course of nature and providence, as it regards the well-being of our children. But here I come to the point of divergence. Here I must speak of OUR part of the work; of those duties which the Creator has devolved upon ourselves. Here, therefore, it becomes my duty to expose the greatest of all mistakes, committed in regard to the greatest of all subjects, and followed by proportionate calamities.

Two grand qualifications are equally necessary in the education of children,—Love and Knowledge. Without love, every child would be regarded as a nuisance, and cast away as soon as born. Without knowledge, love will ruin every child. Nature supplies the love; but she does not supply the knowledge. The love is spontaneous; the knowledge is to be acquired by study and toil, by the most attentive observation and the profoundest reflection. Here, then, lies the fatal error:—parents rest contented with the feeling of love; they do not devote themselves to the acquisition of that knowledge which is necessary to guide it. Year after year, thousands and tens of thousands indulge the delightful sentiment, but never spend an hour in studying the conditions which are indispensable to its gratification.

In regard to the child's physical condition,—its growth, and health, and length of life,—these depend, in no inconsiderable degree, on the health and self-treatment of the mother before its birth. After birth, they depend not only on the vitality and temperature of the air it breathes, on dress, and diet, and exercise, but on certain proportions and rela-

tions which these objects bear to each other. Now the tenderest parental love,—a love which burns, like incense upon an altar, for an idolized child, for a quarter of a century, or for half a century,—will never teach the mother that there are different ingredients in the air we breathe,—that one of them sustains life, that another of them destroys life, —that every breath we draw changes the life-sustaining element into the life-destroying one; and therefore that the air which is to be respired must be perpetually renewed. Love will never instruct the mother what materials or textures of clothing have the proper conducting or non-conducting qualities for different climates, or for different seasons of the year. Love is no chemist or physiologist, and therefore will never impart to the mother any knowledge of the chemical or vital qualities of different kinds of food, of the nature or functions of the digestive organs, of the susceptibilities of the nervous system, nor, indeed, of any other of the various functions on which health and life depend. Hence, the most affectionate but ignorant mother, during the cold nights of winter, will visit the closet-like bed-chamber of her darling, calk up every crevice and cranny, smother him with as many integuments as encase an Egyptian mummy, close the door of his apartment, and thus inflict upon him a consumption, —born of love. Or she will wrap nice comforters about his neck, until, in some glow of perspiration, he flings them off, and dies of the croup. Or she will consult the infinite desires of a child's appetite, instead of the finite powers of his stomach, and thus pamper him, until he languishes into a life of suffering and imbecility, or becomes stupefied and besotted by one of sensual indulgence.

A mother has a first-born child, whom she dotes upon to distraction, but, through some fatal error

in its management, occasioned by her ignorance, it dies in the first, beautiful, budding hour of childhood,—nipped like the sweet blossoms of spring by an untimely frost. Another is committed to her charge, and in her secret heart she says, "I will love this better than the first." But it is not better love that the child needs; it is more knowledge.

It is the vast field of ignorance pertaining to these subjects, in which quackery thrives and fattens. No one who knows any thing of the organs and functions of the human system, and of the properties of those objects in nature to which that system is related, can hear a quack descant upon the miraculous virtues of his nostrums, or can read his advertisements in the newspapers,—wherein, fraudulently towards man, and impiously towards God, he promises to sell an "Elixir of Life," or "The Balm of Immortality," or "Resurrection Pills,"—without contempt for his ignorance, or detestation of his guilt. Could the quack administer his nostrums to the great enemy, Death, then, indeed, *we* might expect to live forever.

And what is the consequence of this excess of love and lack of knowledge on the part of the parent? More than one fifth part,—almost a fourth part,—of all the children who are born, die before attaining the age of one year. A fifth part have died before a seventieth part of the term of existence has been reached! What would the farmer or the shepherd say, if he should lose one fifth part of his lambs or his kids, before a seventieth part of their natural term of life had been reached!! And before the age of five years, more than a third part of all who are born of our race, have returned again to the earth,—the great majority of them having died of that most fatal and wide-spread of all epidemics,—unenlightened parental love. What an inconceivable amount of anxiety for the health

and life of children might be prevented; how much of the agony of bereavement might be saved; how much joy might be won from beholding childhood's rosy beauty and bounding health, if parents, especially mothers, would study such works as those of Doctor Combe, on the Principles of Physiology, as applied to Health and Education, and on Digestion and Dietetics; of Doctor Brigham, on Mental Excitement; or Miss Sedgwick's Means and Ends; and, (if they are to stand at all in the way of mastering this knowledge,) throw Cooper, and Bulwer, and Maryatt, and Boz, into the grate, or under the fore-stick.

When we ascend from the management of the body to the direction and culture of the intellectual and moral nature, the calamitous consequences of ignorance are as much greater, as spirit is more valuable than matter,—because the mischief wrought by unskilfulness is always in proportion to the value of the material wrought upon. In regard to the child's advancement in knowledge and virtue, with what spontaneity and vigor do the parental impulses spring up! They seek, they yearn, they pray for his welfare, for his worldly renown, for his moral excellence,—that he may grow, not only in stature, but in favor with God and man. These parental affections watch over him; they stand like an angelic guard around him; they agonize for his growth in the right, for his redemption from the wrong. But all these affections are blind impulses. They do not know, they cannot devise a single measure, whereby to accomplish the object they would die to attain. Love of children has no knowledge of the four different temperaments,—the fibrous, the sanguine, the nervous, the lymphatic,—or of the different combinations of them, and how different a course of treatment each one of them, or the predominance of either, demands. Love of chil-

dren does not know how to command, in order to insure the habit of prompt and willing obedience, —obedience, in the first place, to parental authority, afterwards to the dictates of conscience when that faculty is developed, and to the laws of God when those laws are made known to them. Love of children does not know in what manner, or in what measure, to inflict punishment; or how to reconcile inflexibility of principle with changes in circumstances. It does not understand the favorable moments when the mind is fitted to receive the seeds of generous, noble, devout sentiments; or when, on the other hand, not even the holiest principles should be mentioned. All this invaluable, indispensable knowledge comes from reading, from study, from observation, from reflection, from forethought;—it never comes, it never can come, from the blind instinct or feeling of parental love. Hence, as we all know, those parents do not train up their children best who love them most. Nay, if the love be not accompanied with knowledge, it precipitates the ruin of its object. This result can be explained in a single word. The child has appetites and desires, without knowledge. These, if unrestrained, all tend to excess. They demand too much of food, dress, liberty, authority, and so forth. The child has a throng of selfish propensities, which, if unbalanced by the higher sentiments, prompt to acts of disrespect, pride, cruelty, injustice. Now the dictate of unintelligent love in the parent is, to assist the child in realizing all its wants. Hence the parent's power supplies the child's weakness in procuring the means for gratifying its excessive desires; and thus, that love which nature designed as its blessing, becomes its curse. What intelligent observer has not seen many a parent run, at the first call of a child, remove all obstructions from his path, and hasten his slow steps onward to ruin!

Solomon says,—explicitly and without qualification,—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT." Now, if this be true, then it is a short and a clear syllogism, that if *men* do depart from the way in which they should go, they were not, *as children*, trained up in it. Or, take the saying only as a general proposition,—one to be applied to the great majority of cases,—and it equally follows that if men, *generally*, do depart from the way in which they should go, then, *generally*, they were not trained up in it. Under the loosest construction, Solomon must have meant, that there are powers, faculties, instrumentalities, graciously vouchsafed by Heaven to man, by which, if discovered, and applied to the processes of education, children, generally, when they become men, will go and do, and love to go and do, as they ought to go and do. No latitudinarianism of interpretation can escape this inference.

And yet, with this authority from the Scriptures before us, as to what may be done, how often does the misconduct of children bring down the gray hairs of parents with sorrow to the grave. With every generation, there reäppear amongst us, the arts of fraud, the hand of violence, and the feet that are swift to shed blood. Nor are flagitious deeds and abandoned lives confined to families alone, where the treatment of children, by their parents, is characterized by gross ignorance and heathenism. Such cases, it is true, abound, and in such numbers, too, as almost to laugh to scorn our claims, as a people, to civilization and Christianity. But how often do we see children issuing from the abodes of rational and pious parents, where a burning love, a hallowed zeal, a life-consuming toil, have been expended upon them,—of parents who have bedewed the nightly pillow with tears, and, morning

and evening, have wrestled with the angel of mercy to bring down blessings upon their heads, —how often do we see these children bursting madly forth, and rushing straight onward to some precipice of destruction; and though parents and kindred and friends pursue, and strive to intercept them ere they reach the brink of ruin; and gather in long array and stand with outstretched arms and imploring voice, to arrest their fatal career,—yet, gathering strength and swiftness, the victims rush by, and plunge into the abyss of perdition. Yet, if there is any truth in the declaration of Solomon, these victims,—at least most of them,—might have been saved, and would have been saved, had the knowledge of the parents been equal to their love. God grant that in saying these things, I may not shoot an arrow of pain through any parent's heart;—still more fervently do I say, God grant that a timely consideration of these truths may turn aside the arrows of pain from every parental breast!

The instinctive love which parents feel for their children is only one of a large class of natural desires,—all of which are subjected to the same conditions. Nature, in each case, supplies the desire, but she leaves it to us to acquire the knowledge which is necessary to guide it. She leaves it to us so to control and regulate the desire, that, in the long-run, it may receive the highest amount of gratification. This truth is susceptible of most extensive illustration. Time, however, will allow me to adduce only a few analogies.

All men are born with a desire for food, but they are born without any knowledge of agriculture, or of the arts or implements of the chase, by means of which food can be procured. The lowest grade of savages feel a natural hunger or thirst as keen as that of the highest orders of civilized man. But the savage has no knowledge

how to rear the luxuries of the garden, the orchard, the grain-field, the pasture, or the fold. Hence he subsists upon such uncooked roots or unsodden flesh, as can be found or caught in the neighborhood of his cave or wigwam. But knowledge,—an excited and cultivated intellect,—has been at work for civilized man; and, in obedience to its command, the earth teems with delicious fruits, the valleys abound with fatness, the ocean becomes tributary; in fine, all the fields of nature are converted into one great laboratory to prepare sweets and fragrance and flavor for his voluptuous table. We derive the appetite, perfect and full-grown, from our Maker; but we are left to discover for ourselves the means and processes by which this appetite can best be gratified. The result of all our knowledge on this subject, is expressed in the common proverb, that the temperate man is the greatest epicure;—that is, the greatest possible amount of gratification from eating and drinking will be enjoyed by the temperate man;—a conclusion, the very opposite of that which the appetite itself suggests.

So in regard to a love of beauty. Nature confers this sentiment, in a greater or less degree, upon all the race. But the cultivation of it, the preparation of objects to gratify it,—architecture, painting, sculpture,—these come through art and genius, by the application of a knowledge of our own acquiring. The Indian bridegroom, stung with love, and seeking to beautify the tawny idol of his affections, besmears her face with red or yellow ochre; he tattoos her skin, and for jewels, suspends a string of bear's claws over her sooty bosom. In consequence of possessing a somewhat higher knowledge, our sense of beauty is elevated perhaps two or three degrees above that of the barbarian. Hence we seek to clothe a beloved object with fine linen, and Tyrian pur-

ple, and silken stuffs of colors rich and costly; and instead of the claws of bears, we adorn her with carcanets of pearl and diamonds. When mankind shall be blessed with that purer and higher knowledge which shall identify the types of beauty with those of excellence, then will our ideal, advancing with the advancing light, demand, as the price of its admiration, richer ornaments than Ophir or Golconda can supply;—it will demand the bloom and elasticity of perfect health, manners born of artlessness and enthusiasm, and a countenance so inscribed with the records of pure thoughts and benevolent deeds, as to be one beaming, holy hieroglyph of love and duty. Then will our exalted sense of beauty repel the aggression of foreign ornaments.

So the love of property, to which for another purpose I have before referred, is common to all. There is an inborn desire for the conveniences, the comforts, the elegancies, the independence, which property confers. But men are not born with one particle of knowledge respecting the means or instruments by which property can be acquired. And we all know how certainly a man, who acts from the blind desire, without any knowledge of the appropriate means, brings ruin upon himself and family. How much knowledge is requisite, what long courses of previous study and apprenticeship are demanded, to fit men for the learned professions, for commerce, manufactures and the mechanic arts. Who would consign his goods to a merchant who knows nothing of the laws of trade, of demand and supply, of eligible markets, seasons, and so forth? What a variety and extent of preliminary knowledge respecting modes and processes must be obtained, before the fabrics of the artisan or the manufacturer can be produced. Suppose a young man of twenty or twenty-five years of age, to

begin to rear a family of children. Suppose him, at the same time, to inherit a hundred thousand dollars in money. He seeks to gratify his parental instinct, by educating his children; and he seeks also to enlarge his estate, by purchasing and carrying on a manufacturing establishment;—but neither on the subject of education nor of manufactures, has he ever thought, or read, or sought instruction. How long, think you, my friends, would it be, before the most perfect machinery ever made by human skill would be wrenched, or crushed, or torn in pieces, under his ignorant management; the best of cottons or woollens spoiled, and his whole fortune dissipated? Without some knowledge of the art of manufacturing, he would hardly know which way to turn the wheels of his machinery; he would not know in what quantities to feed it, or in what order and succession to carry the material from part to part. Without knowledge, also, he will conduct the education of his children quite as ruinously as his pecuniary investments. If he is unacquainted with the different temperaments which his children may have,—the lymphatic, the sanguine, the nervous, the fibrous,—he will make as great mistakes in regard to diet and exercise, to intellectual and moral training, to mental stimulus or restraint, as though he should attempt to weave hemp upon a silk-loom. If he does not know in what order nature develops the faculties, one after another, he will commit the same error, as though he should put the raw material, in the first instance, on the finishing machine, and carry it, last of all, through the preliminary stages. If you will allow me to carry on the comparison, I will add, that, to feed machinery, in any stage of the work, with such an over-quantity of stock as clogs and chokes it, is only the parallel of that common misjudgment which gives to children

longer lessons than they can learn. So, to ply the minds of children with improper motives, in order to accelerate their progress, is a far greater mistake than it would be to drive machinery by doubling the head of water or the power of steam, until every shaft should be twisted, every band stretched, and every pinion loosened, in it. Such a silly adventurer would bring depravation and ruin alike upon the mechanical and the educational departments of his enterprise.

Here lies the great and the only difference between the cases. When material fabrics or commodities are spoiled by a bungler,—when ore is turned into dross in the smelting, when garments are ruined in the making, when a house will not stand, or a ship will not sail,—we *see* what mischief has been done, what materials have been wasted. We understand enough of the subject to know what should have been done, and to compare it with what has been done. But no reflecting man can doubt, for a moment, that the minds of our children,—those treasures of inestimable value,—are corrupted and devastated by every ignorant parent, in a degree at least equal to what the most precious earthly materials would be, in the hands of the rudest workman.

But it is not every child, nor even a majority of children, who, with any propriety, can be compared to mechanical structures, or to those pliant and ductile materials that are wrought into beautiful forms by the skill of the artisan. Children formed in the prodigality of nature, gifted to exert strong influences upon the race, are not passive; —they are endued with vital and efficient forces of their own. Their capacious and fervid souls were created to melt and re-cast opinions, codes, communities, as crude ores are melted and purified in the furnace. To the sensitive and resilient natures of such children, an ungentle touch is a

sting; a hot word is a living coal. By mere innate, spontaneous force, their vehement spirits rise to such a pitch of exaltation, that, if all bland and sedative arts do not assuage them, if all wisdom does not guide them, they become scourges instead of blessings to mankind. Such natures are among the richest gifts of Heaven to the race, —created for great emergencies and enterprises, always finding or making occasions for deeds of immortality;—like Moses, scorning the power of kings and giving deliverance to a captive nation; or like Paul, speaking undaunted in the face of courts, and making potentates tremble. Yet how few parents know, or have ever sought to know, how to manage these impetuous and fiery souls! How many parents regard physical strength as the only antagonist and corrective of spiritual strength,—ignorant of the truth that, to a great extent, they are incommensurable quantities. How few reflect that a child may be as much stronger than the parents in his passions, as the parents are stronger than the child, in their limbs; that wisdom in them, therefore, is the only true correlative of will in him; and that prudence and discretion in the arrangement of circumstances beforehand, are, in thousands of cases, the effectual preventive of the necessity of punishment afterwards. If a man rashly undertakes to use materials which are liable to spontaneous combustion, without any knowledge of the conditions which are sure to generate the flame, ought he to complain of the laws of nature, or of his own ignorance, when he suffers a conflagration? We know that a man of intelligence and circumspection will spend a life in the manufacture or the transportation of gun-powder, without an accident; while a stupid clodpoll will celebrate his first day's service by an explosion.

My friends, is it not incredible that any parent

should ever attempt to manage and direct that mighty force,—a child's soul,—without having first sought to acquire some knowledge of its various attributes, of its upward and its downward-tending faculties, of the reciprocal relations existing between it and the world into which it has been brought, and of the manner in which its marvellous capacities may be developed into harmony and beauty, and sanctified into holiness? Look at that every-day reality in life,—which, were it not so familiar, we should pronounce the most delightful sight in this sorrowing world,—that of a young mother clasping her first-born infant to her breast, while the light and shade that cross her countenance reveal the infinite hopes and fears that alternate within. What is there of ease, pleasure, luxury, fortune, health, life, that she would not barter, could she win a sign from heaven, that her child should grow to manhood, and as it should wax strong in body, should grow also in favor with God and man? Yet, was there any thing in her own education, is there any thing in her daily pursuits in life, or in the tone and habits of society, which lead her to lay hold upon the promise, that if she brings up her child in the way he should go, when he is old, he WILL NOT depart from it? If the hospitalities of her house are to be tendered to a distinguished guest,—nay, if she is only to prepare a refection of cakes for a tea-party, she fails not to examine some cookery-book, or some manuscript recipe, lest she should convert her rich ingredients into unpalatable compounds; but without ever having read one book on the subject of education, without ever having reflected one hour upon this great theme, without ever having sought one conversation with an intelligent person upon it, she undertakes so to mingle the earthly and the celestial elements of instruction for that child's soul, that he shall be

fitted to discharge all duties below, and to enjoy all blessings above. When the young mother has occasion to work the initials of her name upon her household napery, does she not consult the sampler, prepared in her juvenile days, that every stitch may be set with regularity and in order? Yet this same mother surrenders herself to blind ignorance and chance when she is to engrave immortal characters upon the eternal tablets of the soul. To embroider an earthly garment, there must be knowledge and skill; but neither is regarded as necessary for the fit adornment of the soul's imperishable vesture. The young mother seems to think she has done her whole duty to her child when she has christened it George Washington Lafayette, or Evelina Henrietta Augusta; but she consults neither book nor friend to know by what hallowed words of counsel and of impulse she can baptize it into a life of wisdom and of holiness. What wonder then, *what wonder then*, when children grow old, that they should disperse in all ways, rather than walk in the way in which they should go?

If the vehement, but blind love of offspring, which comes by nature, is not enlightened and guided by knowledge, and study, and reflection, it is sure to defeat its own desires. Hence, the frequency and the significance of such expressions as are used by plain, rustic people, of strong common sense:—"There were too many peacocks where that boy was brought up;" or, "The silly girl is not to blame, for she was dolled up, from a doll in the cradle to a doll in the parlor." All children have foolish desires, freaks, caprices, appetites, which they have no power or skill to gratify; but the foolish parent supplies all the needed skill, time, money, to gratify them; and thus the greater talent and resources of the parent foster the propensities of the child into

excess and predominance. The parental love which was designed by Heaven to be the guardian angel of the child, is thus transformed into a cruel minister of evil.

Think, my friends, for one moment, of the marvellous nature with which we have been endowed, —of its manifold and diverse capacities, and of their attributes of infinite expansion and duration. Then cast a rapid glance over this magnificent temple of the universe into which we have been brought. The same Being created both by His omnipotence; and, by His wisdom, He has adapted the dwelling-place to the dweller. The exhaustless variety of natural objects by which we are surrounded; the relations of the family, of society, and of the race; the adorable perfections of the Divine mind,—these are means for the development, and spheres for the activity, and objects for the aspiration of the immortal soul. For the sustentation of our physical natures, God has created the teeming earth, and tenanted the field and the forest, the ocean and the air, with innumerable forms of life; and He has said to us, "have dominion" over them. For the education of the perceptive intellect, there have been provided the countless multitude and diversity of substances, forms, colors, motions,—from a drop of water, to the ocean; from the tiny crystal that sparkles upon the shore, to the sun that blazes in the heavens, and the sun-strown firmament. For the education of the reflecting intellect we have the infinite relations of discovered and undiscovered sciences,—the encyclopædias of matter and of spirit, of which all the encyclopædias of man, as yet extant, are but the alphabet. We have domestic sympathies looking backwards, around, and forwards; and answering to these, are the ties of filial, conjugal, and parental relations. Through our inborn sense of melody and harmony, all joy-

ful and plaintive emotions flow out into spontaneous music; and, not friends and kindred only, but even dead nature echoes back our sorrows and our joys. To give a costless delight to our sense of beauty, we have the variegated landscape, the rainbow, the ever-renewing beauty of the moon, the glories of the rising and the setting sun, and the ineffable purity and splendor of that celestial vision when the northern and the southern auroras shoot up from the horizon, and overspread the vast concave with their many-colored flame, as though it were a reflection caught from the waving banner of angels, when the host of heaven rejoices over some sinner that has repented. And finally, for the amplest development, for the eternal progress of those attributes that are proper to man,—for conscience, for the love of truth, for that highest of all emotions, the love and adoration of our Creator,—God, in his unsearchable riches, has made full provision. And here, on the one hand, is the subject of education,—the child, with its manifold and wonderful powers;—and, on the other hand, this height, and depth, and boundlessness of natural and of spiritual instrumentalities, to build up the nature of that child, into a capacity for the intellectual comprehension of the universe, and into a spiritual similitude to its Author. And who are they that lay their rash hands upon this holy work? Where or when have they learned, or sought to learn, to look at the unfolding powers of the child's soul, and to see what it requires, and then to run their eye and hand over this universe of material and of moral agencies, and to select and apply whatever is needed, at the time needed, and in the measure needed? Surely, in no other department of life is knowledge so indispensable; surely, in no other is it so little sought for. In no other navigation is there such danger of wreck; in no other is there such blind pilotage.

But the parent has the child on hand, and he *must* educate and control him. For this purpose, he must apply such means and motives as he is acquainted with; and use them with such skill as he may happen to possess. In regard to the intellect, the parent has one general notion that the child has faculties by which he can learn, and he has another general notion that there are things to be learned; but, at the same time, he is utterly ignorant of the distinctive nature of the intellectual faculties; of the periods of their respective development; of the particular classes of objects in the external world, and the particular subjects of philosophical speculation, which are related to particular faculties, and adapted to arouse and strengthen them; and he is also ignorant of all the favoring circumstances under which the faculties and their related objects should be brought into communion. In such a condition of things, are not the chances as infinity to one against the proper training of the child?

I say, the parent who has never read or reflected on this subject, is necessarily ignorant of the favoring circumstances under which knowledge should be addressed to a child's mind. What but a profound and widely prevalent ignorance on this point, can account for the fact, that a parent should send his child of four years of age to a dreary and repulsive schoolroom, and plant him there upon a seat, which, like the old instruments of torture, seems to have been contrived in the light of anatomical knowledge, and preädapted to shoot aches and cramps into every joint and muscle? What but ignorance on this subject, could ever permit a teacher to enforce stagnation upon both the body and the mind of a little child, for at least two hours and a half of the three hours in each half day's session of a school? In our old schoolhouses, and under our old system, were

not little children denied alike the repose of sleep and the excitements of being awake? Were not their heads often surrounded by air as hot and dry as that of an African desert, while Boreas was allowed to seize them by the feet? Were they not condemned to read what they did not comprehend, and to commit to memory arbitrary rules in grammar and in arithmetic, which were not explained? Did the parent visit the school, or manifest interest and sympathy in the studies of the child? And when, at last, alienation and disgust succeeded, when the school was deserted, the books thrown aside, and scenes of rude and riotous pleasure were sought in their stead, did not the parent justify himself, and throw the blame of his own folly upon nature, by saying, Alas! the child never loved learning? But I ask whether such a course of proceeding is a fair trial of the question, whether God has created the human intellect to hate knowledge? In all soberness I ask, whether it would not be every whit as fair an experiment, should an idiot seize a child in one hand and a honey-pot in the other, and after besmearing the soles of his feet and the palms of his hands, and the nape of his neck with the honey, and producing only resistance and disgust, should then deny that children like honey?

Still more disastrous are the mistakes of ignorance, in moral training. All punishment, for instance, holds the most intimate relation to morals; and yet, how reckless and absurd is its infliction, when administered by ignorant or passionate parents. When a child is made to expiate a wrong, by committing to memory two chapters in the Bible,—as many a child has been compelled to do,—does it make him love the right or—hate the Bible? When a rich father threatens to disinherit a wayward son, does the menace tend to make that son obey the fifth commandment, or does it only make him

hope that his father will die in a fit, and too sud denly to make a will? I once saw the mother of a large family of children,—a woman who would have been ashamed not to be able to discuss the merits of the latest novel,—induce her little son to take a nauseous dose of medicine, by telling him that if he did not swallow it quickly, she would call in his little sister and give it all to her; and so strong had the selfish desire of getting something from his sister become, that the little imp shut his eyes, scowled terribly, and gulped down the dose. When a child, to whom no glimpse of the necessity and beauty of truth has ever been revealed, sees a terrific storm of vengeance gathering over him, and just ready to burst upon his head, it is not depravity, it is only the instinct of self-preservation, that prompts him to escape through falsehood. Bodily fear is one of the lowest of all motives, whether we regard the object or the actor. As it regards the object, it is the brute, and the brutish part of man only, that are amenable to it. As it regards the agent, no one is so ignorant and barbarous as not to know its power. The Hottentot, the Esquimaux, the Feejee Islander,—all know that the power of inflicting corporal pain produces subjection;—nay, the more ignorant and barbarian any one may be, the more sure is he to make the power of inflicting pain his only resource. I do not mean to say, that, in the present state of society, this motive can be wholly dispensed with, in the government of children; or, that evils worse than itself might not arise from its universal proscription. Still, its true place is certainly at, or very near, the bottom of the scale. It may be used to prevent wrong, by the sudden arrest of the offender; but it never can be used as an incentive to good. Other low classes of motives consist in the gratification of appetite, the acquisition of wealth, the love of

display, the desire of outshining others, and so forth. A character of high and enduring excellence can never be formed from any quantity or any combination of these elements. If distinction is the only thing for which my heart pants, and I happen to belong to a community or a party that reverences truth and virtue, then I shall be led to simulate such motives and to perform such external actions as resemble truth and virtue. Even then, however, the semblance, and not the reality, will be my aim. But if I am transferred to another community or party, which carries its measures by persecution and senseless clamor, or by persistence in falsehood and wrong; then, spurred on by the same love of distinction, I shall persecute, and clamor senselessly, and persist to the end in falsehood and wrong. It is because of a prevalent ignorance how to use the motives of filial affection, of justice, of benevolence, of duty to God, of doing right for the internal delight which doing right bestows;—it is because of this prevalent ignorance, that bodily fear, the pleasures of appetite, emulation and pride, constitute so large a portion of the motive-forces that are now employed in the education of children. And parents are yet to be made to believe, with a depth of conviction they have never experienced; they are to be made to feel as they have never yet felt, that, from the same infant natures committed to their care, they may rear up children who will be an honor to their old age, and a staff for their declining years, or those who will bring down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave;—and that, in the vast majority of cases, these results depend, more than upon all things else, upon the knowledge or the ignorance, the wisdom or the folly, that superintends their training.

In explaining that part of the work of education which the Creator seems to have committed

to the hands of men, I have been led thus far to speak of our duties as individuals, rather than of those social and civil duties which devolve upon us as neighbors, as citizens, and as constituent parts of the government.

The first glance at our *social* position reveals one of the most striking and significant facts in the arrangements of Providence; and, as a consequence of this fact, one of the clearest of our social duties. A parent, however vigilant and devoted he may be, prepares only a part of the influences which go to the education of his child. The community, and the State where he resides, prepare the rest. The united force of all makes up the positive education which the child receives. No person can now be situated as Adam and Eve were, when rearing the two elder members of their family. Without knowledge, and guided only by chance, or by their own uninstructed sagacity, they reared first a murderer, and then one who feared God. The first was what we call a spoiled child, —whether ruined by indulgence or by severity, we know not, perhaps by both;—the second had the advantage of a little parental experience. But since their day, all children are subject to influences external to the parental household. No parent, now, can bring up his child in an exhausted receiver. And hence the necessity that each parent should look, not only to his own conduct, but to the conduct of the community in which he resides. That community must be moral and exemplary, in order that he may be safe. Here, therefore, even an enlightened selfishness coincides with benevolence. In order to our own highest good, we are bound to do good to others; for we cannot be wholly safe while they are wrong. How glorious the appointment of Providence, which thus reconciles self-love with the love of the race; which, indeed, makes the former defeat its own ends,

when it pursues them in contravention of the latter. The love of our own children, then, when duly enlightened, prompts us to regard the welfare of our neighbors'.

Emphatically do some of the most important of all duties devolve upon us, as members of a State which is invested with the authority to legislate for itself. If we were governed by others, on their heads would be the crime of our misgovernment; but when we govern ourselves, and govern wrongly, we unite, in our own persons, both the guilt and the calamities of misgovernment. In the present state of society, an education of a high character cannot be universally diffused, without a union of the forces of society, and a concert in its action. Coöperation and unity of purpose will be found to increase the power of citizens, in peace, as much as they do of soldiers in war. And hence the duty of combined action, on the part of the community, in reference to this subject. But combined action can never be effected, to any useful purpose, amongst a free people, without agreement, without compact, that is,—where the action of great numbers is concerned,—without law. Upon the lawgivers then, there fastens an obligation of inexpressible magnitude and sacredness; and utterly unworthy the honorable station of a lawgiver is he, who would elude this duty, or who unfaithfully discharges it, or who perverts it to any sinister purpose. And why should the legislator forever debase his character to that of a scourger, a prison-keeper, and an executioner? Why, wearing a gorgon's head and carrying stripes in his hand, should he pass before the community, as an avenger of evil only, and not as the promoter and rewarder of good? If terror and retribution are his highest attributes, then his post is no more honorable than that of the beadle who whips, or of the headsman who

decapitates. A legislator, worthy of the name, should seek for honor and veneration, by moving through society as a minister of beneficence, rather than as a spectre of fear. He should reflect that new and better results in the condition of mankind, are to be secured by new and wiser measures. We are not to ask Heaven for the annihilation of the present race, and the creation of a new one; but we are to ascertain and to use those means, for the renovation, the redemption of mankind, which have been given, or which the veracity of Heaven stands pledged to give, whenever, on our part, we perform the conditions preliminary to receiving them.

You all recollect, my friends, that memorable fire which befell the city of New York, in the year 1835. It took place in the heart of that great emporium,—a spot where merchants, whose wealth was like princes', had gathered their treasures. In but few places on the surface of the globe, was there accumulated such a mass of riches. From each continent and from all the islands of the sea, ships had brought thither their tributary offerings, until it seemed like a magazine of the nations,—the coffer of the world's wealth. In the midst of these hoards, the fire broke out. It raged between two and three days. Above, the dome of the sky was filled with appalling blackness; below, the flames were of an unapproachable intensity of light and heat; and such were the inclemency of the season and the raging of the elements, that all human power and human art seemed as vanity and nothing. Yet, situated in the very midst of that conflagration, there was one building, upon which the storm of fire beat in vain. All around, from elevated points in the distance, from steeples and the roofs of houses, thousands of the trembling inhabitants gazed upon the awful scene; and thought,—as

well they might,—that it was one of universal and undistinguishing havoc. But, as some swift cross-wind furrowed athwart that sea of flame, or a broad blast beat down its aspiring crests, there, safe amidst ruin, erect amongst the falling, was seen that single edifice. And when, at last, the ravage ceased, and men again walked those streets in sorrow, which so lately they had walked in pride, there stood that solitary edifice, unharmed amid surrounding desolation;—from the foundation to the cope-stone, unscathed;—and over the treasures which had been confided to its keeping, the smell of fire had not passed. There it stood, like an honest man in the streets of Sodom. Now, why was this? It was constructed from the same materials, of brick and mortar, of iron and slate, with the thousands around it, whose substance was now rubbish, and their contents ashes. Now, why was this? *It was built by a workman.* IT WAS BUILT BY A WORKMAN. The man who erected that surviving, victorious structure *knew* the nature of the materials he used; he *knew* the element of fire; he *knew* the power of combustion. Fidelity seconded his knowledge. He did not put in stucco for granite, nor touchwood for iron. He was not satisfied with outside ornaments, with finical cornices and gingerbread work; but deep in all its hidden foundations,—in the interior of its walls, and in all its secret joints,—where no human eye should ever see the compact masonry,—he consolidated, and cemented, and closed it in, until it became impregnable to fire,—insoluble in that volcano. And thus, my hearers, must parents become workmen in the education of their children. They must know that, from the very nature and constitution of things, a lofty and enduring character cannot be formed by ignorance and chance. They must know that no skill or power of man can ever lay

the imperishable foundations of virtue, by using the low motives of fear, and the pride of superiority, and the love of worldly applause or of worldly wealth, any more than they can rear a material edifice, storm-proof and fire-proof, from bamboo and cane-brake!

Until, then, this subject of education is far more studied and far better understood than it has ever yet been, there can be no security for the formation of pure and noble minds; and though the child that is born to-day may turn out an Abel, yet we have no assurance that he will not be a Cain. Until parents will learn to train up children in the way they should go,—until they will learn what that way is,—the paths that lead down to the realms of destruction must continue to be thronged;—the doting father shall feel the pangs of a disobedient and profligate son, and the mother shall see the beautiful child whom she folds to her bosom, turn to a coiling serpent and sting the breast upon which it was cherished. Until the thousandth and the ten thousandth generation shall have passed away, the Deity may go on doing his part of the work, but unless we do our part also, the work will never be done,—and until it is done, the river of parental tears must continue to flow. Unlike Rachel, parents shall weep for their children *because they are*, and not because they *are not;*—nor shall they be comforted, until they will learn, that God in His infinite wisdom has pervaded the universe with immutable laws,—laws which may be made productive of the highest forms of goodness and happiness;—and, in His infinite mercy, has provided the means by which those laws can be discovered and obeyed; but that He has left it to us to learn and to apply them, or to suffer the unutterable consequences of ignorance. But when we shall learn and shall obey those laws,—when

the immortal nature of the child shall be brought within the action of those influences,—each at its appointed time,—which have been graciously prepared for training it up in the way it should go, then may we be sure, that God will clothe its spirit in garments of *amianthus*, that it may not be corrupted, and of *asbestos*, that it may not be consumed, and that it will be able to walk through the pools of earthly pollution, and through the furnace of earthly temptation, and come forth white as linen that has been washed by the fuller, and pure as the golden wedge of Ophir that has been refined in the refiner's fire.

LECTURE V.

1841.

LECTURE V.

AN HISTORICAL VIEW OF EDUCATION; SHOWING ITS DIGNITY AND ITS DEGRADATION.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:

In treating any important and comprehensive subject, it will inevitably happen that some portions of it will be found less interesting than others; —inferior in beauty, dignity, elevation. In every book we read, some chapters will be less animating and instructive than the rest; in every landscape we survey, some features less impressive and grand; in every journey we take, some stages more dreary and laborious. Yet we must accept them together, as a whole,—the poor with the good. This is my apology for presenting to you, at the present time, a class of views, which,—whether they excite more or less interest,—will derive none of it from flattering our self-complacency.

In attempting a series of lectures on the great subject of Education, I have arrived at a topic which must be discussed, however far it may fall below the average in interest and attractiveness. In previous lectures, I have spoken of the general state and condition of education amongst us; and have pointed out some of the more urgent and immediate wants which it enjoins us to supply. I have endeavored to unfold some of the more vital principles of this great science; I have spoken of its objects; of its importance in all countries and in all times; and, more especially, of its absolute and unconditional necessity under social and political institutions like ours. Under this

last head, I have endeavored to demonstrate that, in a land of liberty,—that is, in a land where the people, in their collective capacity, are free to do wrong as well as free to do right; where there is no sanguinary or surgical code of laws, to cut off the offending members of society; no thousand-eyed police to detect transgression and crush it in the germ;—in fine, where there are few external restraints which can be brought to bear upon the appetites and passions of men,—that, in such a land, there must be internal restraints; that reason, conscience, benevolence, and a reverence for all that is sacred, must supply the place of force and fear; and, for this purpose, the very instincts of self-preservation admonish us to perfect our system of education, and to carry it on far more generally and more vigorously than we have ever yet done. For this purpose we must study the principles of education more profoundly; we must make ourselves acquainted with the art, or processes, by which those principles can be applied in practice; and, by establishing proper agencies and institutions, we must cause a knowledge both of the science and the art to be diffused throughout the entire mass of the people.

In this stage of the inquiry, it seems proper to consider in what relative esteem or disesteem the subject of education has heretofore been held, and is now held, in the regards of men. Let us seek an answer to such questions as these:—Have men assigned to the cause of education a high or a low position? What things have they placed above it; and what things, (if any,) have they placed below it? How have its followers been honored or rewarded? What means, instrumentalities, accommodations, have been provided for carrying on the work? In fine, when its interests have come in competition with other interests, which have been made to yield? It is related of a certain

king, that, when embarked on a voyage, attended by some of his courtiers, and carrying with him some of his treasures, a storm arose, which made it necessary to lighten the ship;—whereupon, he commanded his courtiers to be thrown overboard, but saved his money. How is it with parents, who are embarked with fortune and family on this voyage of life;—when they need a better schoolhouse to save their children from ill health, or a better teacher to rescue them from immorality and ignorance; or even a slate or a shilling's worth of paper to save them from idleness;—have we any parents amongst us, or have we not, who, under such circumstances, will fling the child overboard, and save the shilling?

—A ten pound weight will not more certainly weigh down a five pound weight, than a man will act in obedience to that which, on the whole, is his strongest motive. When, therefore, we would ascertain the rank which education actually holds in the regards of any community, we must not merely listen to what that community says; we must see what it does. This is especially true, in our country, where this cause has so many flatterers, but so few friends. Not by their *words*, but by their *works*, shall ye know them, is a test of universal application. Nor must we stop with inspecting the form of the system which may have been anywhere established; we must see whether it be a live system, or an automaton.

A practical unbelief as to the power of education,—the power of physical, intellectual and moral training,—exists amongst us. As a people, we do not believe that these fleshly tabernacles,—which we call tabernacles of clay,—may, by a proper course of training, become as it were tabernacles of iron; or, by an improper course of training, may become tabernacles of glass. We do not believe, that if we would understand and obey

the Physical Laws of our nature, our bodies might be so compacted and toughened, that they would outlast ten cast-iron bodies; or, on the other hand, that by ignorant and vicious management, they may become so sleazy and puny, that a body of glass, made by a glass-blower, would outlast ten of them. We have no practical belief that the human intellect, under a course of judicious culture, can be made to grow brighter and brighter, like the rising sun, until it shall shed its light over the dark problems of humanity, and put ignorance and superstition to flight;—we do not believe this, as we believe that corn will grow, or that a stone will fall; and yet the latter facts are no more in accordance with the benign laws of nature than the former. We manifest no living, impulsive faith in the scriptural declaration, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he *will not* depart from it." The Scripture does not say that he *probably* will not depart from it; or that in nine cases out of ten he will not depart from it; but it asserts, positively and unconditionally, that he WILL NOT depart from it;—the declaration being philosophically founded upon the fact, that God has made provision for the moral welfare of all his creatures, and that, when we do not attain to it, the failure is caused by our own ignorance or neglect. It is not more true that a well-built ship will float in sea-water instead of diving to the bottom, than it is that spiritually-cultivated affections will buoy up their possessor above the low indulgences of sensuality, and avarice, and profaneness, and intemperance, and irreverence towards things sacred.

But I repeat, that, as a people, we have no living faith in these sublime and indestructible truths;—no faith that makes the mind think and the hand work; no faith that induces exertions and sacrifices, as men exert themselves to acquire

fortunes or to obtain honors. Did we comprehend, in all their vastness and splendor, the rewards of earthly honor and glory, and of a blissful immortality, which an appropriate training of all parts of their nature is fitted to procure for our children, then we should hunger and thirst after the requisite knowledge; we should make all efforts and sacrifices to secure the outward means, by which so great a prize could be won; and we should subordinate all other desires to this grand desire. It would rise with us in the morning, attend us through the day, retire with us to the nightly couch, and mingle its aspirations, not only with our prayers but with our dreams.

And, furthermore, as a people, we justify our scepticism in regard to the power of education; we virtually charge it with impotency; we say that, of two children, brought up in the same family, in precisely the same manner, and under the same influences, one shall be almost a saint, and the other quite a sinner; when the truth is, that the natural temperament and dispositions of children belonging to the same family, are often so different from each other, that their being brought up in precisely the same manner, under the same influences, and, of course, without any of the necessary discriminations, is enough to account for the result that, while one of them may be almost a saint, the other should be the chief of sinners.

We also appeal to the history of the past, and aver that among the most enlightened nations of the earth, education has done little or nothing towards producing a state of individual and social well-being, at once universal and permanent;—and now, in this infancy of the world, we rashly prescribe limits to what may be done, from what has been done,—which is about as wise as it would be to say of an infant, that because it

never has walked or talked, it never will walk or talk.

My purpose and hope, on the present occasion, are, to vindicate the cause of education from this charge of imbecility; and to show that it has prospered less than other causes have prospered, for the sole and simple, but sufficient reason, that it has been cherished less than other causes have been cherished,—not only in former times and in other countries, but in our own time and country, that is, *always* and *every where*.

I affirm generally, that, up to the present age and hour, the main current of social desires and energies,—the literature, the laws, the wealth, the talent, the character-forming institutions of the world,—have flowed in other channels, and left this one void of fertilizing power. Philosophers, moralists, sages, who have illumined the world with the splendor of their genius on other subjects, have rarely shed the feeblest beam of light upon this. Of all the literature of the ancients which has come down to us, only a most meagre and inconsiderable part has any reference to education. Examine Homer and Virgil, among the poets; Herodotus, Josephus or Livy, among the historians; or Plutarch among biographers; and you would never infer that, according to their philosophy, the common mass of children did not grow up noble or hateful, by a force of their own, like a cedar of Lebanon, or a wild thorn-tree.

The most important and most general fact which meets us, on approaching this subject, is, that, until within less than two centuries of the present time, no system of *free* schools for a whole people was maintained anywhere upon earth; and then, only in one of the colonies of this country, —that colony being the feeble and inconsiderable one of Massachusetts, containing at that time only a few thousand inhabitants.

Among several of the most powerful nations of antiquity, where laws on the subject of education existed, there were no *Public* Schools. Rome, which so long swayed the destinies of the world, and at last, sunk to so ignominious a close, had no *Public* Schools. Its schools were what we call *Private*,—undertaken on speculation, and by any person, however unsuitable or irresponsible.

Among the Jews, there seems to be no evidence that there were schools even for boys. It is supposed that even arithmetic was not taught to them, and so universally was the education of females neglected, that even the daughters of the priests could not read and write. Girls, however, were instructed in music and dancing.

The part of education most attended to by all the ancient nations, was that which tended to strengthen and harden the body. Even this, however, was hardly worthy of being called *physical* education, because it was conducted without any competent notions of anatomy or physiology. As war was the grand object which nations proposed to themselves, the education of male children was conducted in reference to their becoming soldiers. In modern times we have gone to the other extreme,—educating the mind, or rather parts of the mind, to the almost total neglect of the body. A striking illustration of these facts is, that the places appropriated to bodily exercises among the Greeks, were called *Gymnasia;* while the Germans, who excel in the cultivation of classical literature, call those schools where mind is cultivated, to the almost entire neglect of the body, by the same name. There can be no true education without the union of both.

The *subject-matter* of education was, of course, very limited amongst all ancient nations. Their encyclopædia of knowledge would have been but a *primer*, in size, compared with ours. The

seven liberal arts taught in the celebrated schools of Alexandria, in the time of our Savior, were grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music; and these constituted the complete circle of liberal knowledge. As eloquence conferred a celebrity inferior only to success in arms, it was more assiduously cultivated than any of the other studies. But rhetoric gives only a power over men, while natural philosophy gives a power over nature. In no one respect is the contrast or disparity between ancient and modern times more remarkable than in their ignorance of, and our acquaintance with the natural sciences.

It would be unjust to pass unnoticed a few illustrious educators among the ancients, who existed, not in accordance with, but in defiance of the spirit of the age in which they lived. One of the earliest, and probably the most remarkable of these, was Pythagoras, a Greek, born between five and six hundred years before Christ. He opened a school in the southern part of Italy; and proved the power of education by the results of his labors. Under his instructions, his pupils became men of the most exemplary and noble character; and going out from his school into the different cities of Magna Græcia, they effected the most beneficent revolutions in the social relations of life, and the public institutions of society. Music with him was a prominent means of culture. Each day began and ended with songs, accompanied by the lyre or some other instrument. Particular songs, with corresponding metres and tunes, lively or plaintive, religious or mirthful,—were prepared, as excitants or antidotes for particular passions or emotions.

Following Pythagoras, were Socrates, Plato and Aristotle among the Greeks, and Quintilian among the Romans,—great men, indeed,

but with not enough of great men around them to correct their errors; and hence it may be questioned whether the authority of their names has not propagated, through succeeding times, more of error than of truth. This is doubtless true of Aristotle, if not of some of the rest.

Little was done by any of the ancient nations for the honor or emolument even of the best of teachers. We know that Socrates was put to death for his excellences; and, according to some accounts, Pythagoras fell in a public commotion which had been raised by factious hostility to his teachings. Julius Cæsar was the first who procured for Grecian scholars an honorable reception at Rome, by conferring the right of citizenship upon them.* Augustus encouraged men of learning by honorable distinctions and rewards, and exempted teachers from holding certain public offices; but, at one time, a hundred and seventy years before Christ, Grecian philosophers and rhetoricians were expelled from Rome by a decree of the censors.

Quintilian, one of the most eminent and successful of teachers, is supposed to have been the first, and perhaps the only one, among the ancients, who disused and condemned whipping in school; but his power seems, for many centuries, to have been among the lost arts. He taught in the last half of the first century of the Christian era.

Scattered up and down,—but with vast intervals,—among Grecian and Roman writings, we now and then catch a glimpse of this multiform subject;—as when Polybius speaks of the influence of music in refining the character of the Arcadians; or when Horace says that the cultivation of the Fine Arts prevents men from degen-

* Perhaps it is not generally known that Julius Cæsar wrote a Latin Grammar.

erating into brutes;—but considering the vast expanse,—ages of time and millions of minds,—over which these few beams of light were thrown, what right have we to say, that the power and the beneficence of education had any opportunity to make known their transforming and redeeming prerogatives, in ancient times?

It occurs to me here to make a single remark in reference to the limited number of those who enjoyed the advantages of education, among the ancients. I have elsewhere expounded that beautiful law, in the Divine economy, by which the improvement of the society around us is made indispensable to our own security,—because no man, living in the midst of a vicious community, can be sure that all the virtuous influences which he imparts to his own children, will not be neutralized and lost, by the counter influences exerted upon them by others. The sons of Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles, Thucydides, and even of Socrates himself, were contaminated by the corruptions of the times, and thus defeated their paternal hopes. The parent who wishes to bring up his own children well, but refuses to do all in his power to perfect the common, educational institutions around him, should go with his family into voluntary exile,—he should fly to some Juan Fernandez, where no contagion of others' vices can invade his solitude and defeat his care.

Shortly after the commencement of the Christian era, all idea of general popular education, and almost all correct notions concerning education itself, died out of the minds of men. A gloomy and terrible period succeeded, which lasted a thousand years,—a sixth part of the past duration of the race of men! Approaching this period from the side of antiquity, or going back to view it from our own age, we come, as it were, to the borders of a great Gulf of Despair. Gazing

down from the brink of this remorseless abyss, we behold a spectacle resembling rather the maddest orgies of demons, than any deeds of men. Oppression usurped the civil throne. Persecution seized upon the holy altar. Rulers demanded the unconditional submission of body and soul, and sent forth ministers of fire and sword to destroy what they could not enslave. Innocence changed places with guilt, and bore all its penalties. Even remorse seems to have died from out the souls of men. As high as the halls of the regal castle rose into the air, so deep beneath were excavated the dungeons of the victim, into which hope never came. By the side of the magnificent Cathedral was built the Inquisition; and all those who would not enter the former, and bow the soul in homage to men, were doomed by the latter to have the body broken or burned. All that power, wealth, arts, civilization had conferred upon the old world,—even new-born, divine Christianity itself,—were converted into instruments of physical bondage and spiritual degradation. These centuries have been falsely called the Dark Ages; they were not *dark;* they glare out more conspicuously than any other ages of the world; but, alas! they glare with infernal fires!

What could education do in such an age? Nothing! nothing! Its voice was hushed; its animation was suspended. It must await the revival of letters, the art of printing, and other great revolutions in the affairs of the world, before it could hope to obtain audience among men.

In the Augustan age of English literature,—in the days of Johnson, Goldsmith, Swift, Pope, Addison,—in all the beautiful writings of these great men, almost nothing is said on the subject of education. Not any where is there a single

expression showing that they, or either of them, had any just conception of its different departments, and of the various and distinct processes by which the work of each is to be carried on. Dr. Johnson has a few paragraphs, scattered up and down over his voluminous writings; but by far the most labored passage he ever prepared on the subject, was a forensic argument for Boswell, defending the brutal infliction of corporal punishment so common in those days. To show the opinion of this great man respecting the propriety of giving an education to the laboring and poor classes, let me quote a sentence or two from his "Review of Free Inquiry."

"I know not whether there are not many states of life, in which *all knowledge less than the highest wisdom will produce discontent and danger.* I believe it may be sometimes found that *a little learning to a poor man is a dangerous thing.*"

"Though it should be granted that those who are *born to poverty and drudgery* should not be *deprived by an improper education of the opiate of ignorance*, yet," &c.

One of these expressions of Dr. Johnson seems to have been caught from a celebrated couplet of Pope:

> "A little learning is a dangerous thing,
> *Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring;*
> There, shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
> But drinking deeper sobers us again."

One would like to know what extent of acquired knowledge would constitute "*deep drinking*," in the sense of this authority; or, in surveying the vastness of the works of God, whether all that Pope himself knew, though it were multiplied a hundred fold, would not be "a dangerous thing." The doctrine of this passage is as false in the eye of reason, as the simile is in the creed of a *tee-totaller!*

Pope has another oft-quoted passage, in the last line of which, namely ;—

"Just as the twig is bent, the tree 's inclined,"—

he uses the word "twig" in a false sense, as it properly means the end of a limb, and not the stem or shoot which expands into a tree. In this he was probably misled by the strength of his associations, because the twigs, or ends of limbs, performed so important a part in the work of education in his day, that they had become to him the type and symbol of the whole process. At the most, Pope merely symbolizes the general truth ; he nowhere proposes to tell us what modes or processes of cultivation, will stimulate its aspiring tendencies, or bow it downwards to the earth ;—he never pretends to instruct us how the tiny germ just breaking from the shell, or the tender shoot just peering from the earth, may be reared into the lofty tree, bearing a forest-like crown of branches upon its top, and having limbs and trunk of such massiveness and cohesive strength, that they will toss off the storm and survive the thunderbolt.

In one of the numbers of the Spectator, Addison compares the qualities of different dispositions to different kinds of flowers in a garden ; but the article is short, and was written for humor rather than for instruction.

Shakspeare gives us a glimpse of the repulsive aspects of educational means, in his time, when he describes the child as "creeping, like snail, unwillingly to school."

Shenstone makes himself merry with the toils and privations, and homely manners of a school dame.

Goldsmith describes a schoolmaster as an arbitrary, tyrannical, storm-faced brute.

Cowper, in his earnest appeals, preferred in

behalf of the private tutors of *gentlemen's* sons, gives us the following glimpses of the indignities to which they were customarily subjected in his day:

> "*Doom him not then to solitary meals,*
> But recollect that he has sense and feels;—
> His post not mean, his talent not unknown,
> *He deems it hard to vegetate alone.*
> And if *admitted* at thy board to sit,
> *Account him no just mark for idle wit;*
> Offend not him, whom modesty restrains
> From repartee, with jokes that he disdains;
> Much less transfix his feelings with an oath,
> *Nor frown, unless he vanish with the cloth.*"

Sir Walter Scott gathers all ungainliness of person, and awkwardness of manner, and slovenliness of dress, into one person, makes him horrid with superstition and pedantry, and names the pedagogue *Dominie Sampson.* Even in his sober moments, when expressing his own thoughts, rather than bodying forth the common idea of the times, he says of Dr. Adam, the learned author of the "Roman Antiquities," that, "He was deeply imbued with that fortunate vanity which alone could induce a man, *who has arms to pare and burn a muir, to submit to the still more toilsome task of cultivating youth.*"

In some admirable essays lately written in England, for an educational prize, the condition of the school teacher is represented as being below that of menial servants, throughout the kingdom of Great Britain.*

Milton, it is true, wrote a short tract on education, beautiful to read, but wholly destitute of

* I find the following pointed remark, in a lecture delivered before the American Institute of Instruction, at Pittsfield, in 1843, by R. B. Hubbard, Esq., the accomplished Principal of the High School at Worcester, Mass.:—"The meed of praise has been very liberally and justly awarded to Washington Irving for his valuable contributions to our scanty stock of polite literature; yet it may well be questioned, whether the injury done to the cause of common education, in the character of Ichabod Crane, has not more than cancelled the whole debt."

practical instruction; and it would be unpardonable to pass by that admirable treatise, Locke's "Thoughts on Education;"—but while his system of metaphysics, which is the poorest of all his works, has been made a text-book both in the universities of England and America, this excellent treatise, which is by far better than any thing which had ever then been written, has been almost wholly neglected and forgotten.

Consider, too, my friends, another general but decisive fact, showing in what subordinate estimation this paramount subject has been held. The human mind is so constituted that it cannot embrace any great idea, but, forthwith, all the faculties strive to aggrandize and adorn and dignify it. Let any principle or sentiment be elevated by the public voice,—whether rightfully or wrongfully,—to a station of preëminence or grandeur, in the eyes of men, and it is at once personified, and, as it were, consecrated. The arts go, as on a pilgrimage, to do it reverence. Music celebrates it in national songs. Sculpture embodies it in enduring substance, and clothes it in impressive forms. Painting catches each flashing beam of inspiration from its look, transfers it to her canvass, and holds it fast for centuries, in her magic coloring. Architecture rears temples for its residence and shrines for its worship. Religion sanctifies it. In fine, whatever is accounted high or holy in any age, all the sentiments of taste, beauty, imagination, reverence, belonging to that age, ennoble it with a priesthood, deify its founders or lawgivers while living, and grant them apotheosis and homage when dead. Such proofs of veneration and love signalized the worship of the true God among the Jews, and the worship of false gods among pagans. Such devotion was paid to the sentiment of Beauty among the Athenians; to the iron-hearted god of War

among the Romans; to Love and knightly bearing in the age of chivalry.

Without one word from the historian, and only by studying a people's relics, and investigating the figurative expressions in their literature and law, one might see reflected, as from a mirror, the moral scale on which they arranged their ideas of good and great. Though history should not record a single line in testimony of the fact, yet who, a thousand years hence, could fail to read, in their symbols, in their forms of speech, and in the technical terms of their law, the money-getting, money-worshipping tendencies of all commercial nations, during the last and the present centuries? The word "sovereign," we know, means a potentate invested with lawful dignity and authority; and it implies subjects who are bound to honor and obey. Hence, in Great Britain, a gold coin, worth twenty shillings, is called a "*sovereign;*" and happy is the political sovereign who enjoys such plenitude of power and majesty, and has so many loyal and devoted subjects as this vicegerent of royalty. An ancient English coin was called an *angel.* Its value was only ten shillings, and yet it was named after a messenger from heaven. In the Scriptures, and in political law, a *crown* is the emblem and personification of might and majesty, of glory and blessedness. The synonyme of all these is a piece of silver worth six shillings and seven pence. As the king has his representative in a sovereign, so a duke has his in a ducat,—the inferior value of the latter corresponding with the inferior dignity of its archetype. As Napoleon was considered the mightiest ruler that France ever knew, so, for many years, her highest coin was called a *Napoleon;* though now, in the French mint, they strike double-Napoleons. God grant that the world may never see a double-Napoleon of flesh and blood!

Our forefathers subjected themselves to every worldly privation for the sake of liberty,—and when they had heroically endured toil and sacrifice for eight long years,—and at last achieved the blessing of independence,—they showed their veneration for the Genius of Liberty by placing its image and superscription—upon a *cent!*

So, too, in our times, epithets the most distinctively sacred, are tainted with cupidity. Mammon is not satisfied with the heart-worship of his devotees; he has stolen the very language of the Bible and the Liturgy; and the cardinal words of the sanctuary have become the business phraseology of bankers, exchange-brokers, and lawyers. The word "good," as applied to character, originally meant benevolent, virtuous, devout, pious;—now, in the universal dialect of traffic and credit, a man is technically called *good* who pays his notes at maturity; and thus, this almost divine epithet is transferred from those who laid up their treasures in heaven, to such as lay up their treasures on earth. The three days' respite which the law allows for the payment of a promissory note or bill of exchange, after the stipulated period has expired, is called "*grace,*" in irreverent imitation of the sinner's chance for pardon. On the performance of a broken covenant, by which a mortgaged estate is saved from forfeiture, it is said, in the technical language of the law, to be saved by "*redemption.*" The document by which a deceased man's estate is bequeathed to his survivors, is called a *testament;* and were the glad tidings of the New Testament looked for as anxiously as are the contents of a rich man's last will and testament, there would be no further occasion for the Bible Societies. Indeed, on opening some of our law-books, and casting the eye along the running-titles at the top of the pages, or on the marginal notes, and observing the frequent recurrence

of such words as "covenant-broken," "grace," "redemption," "testament," and so forth, one might very naturally fall into the mistake of supposing the book to be a work on theology, instead of the law of real estate or bank stock.

I group together a few of these extraordinary facts, my friends, to illustrate the irresistible tendency of the human mind to dignify, honor, elevate, aggrandize, and even sanctify, whatever it truly respects and values. But education,—that synonyme of mortal misery and happiness; that abbreviation for earth and heaven and hell,—where are the conscious or unconscious testimonials to its worth? What honorable, laudatory epithets; what titles of encomium or of dignity have been bestowed upon its professors? What, save such titles as pedagogue, (which, among the Romans, from whom we derived it, meant a slave,) and pedant, and knight of the birch and ferule? What sincere or single offering has it received from the hand or voice of genius? Traverse the long galleries of art, and you will discover no tribute to its worth. Listen to all the great masters of music, and you will hear no swelling notes or chorus in its praise. Search all the volumes of all the poets, and you will rarely find a respectful mention of its claims, or even a recognition of its existence. In sacred and devotional poetry, with which all its higher attributes so intimately blend and harmonize, it has found no place. As proof of this extraordinary fact, let me say that, within the last five years, I have been invited to lecture on the subject of education, in churches of all the leading religious denominations of New England; and perhaps in the majority of instances the lecture has been preceded or followed by the devotional exercises of prayer and singing. On these occasions, probably every church hymn-book belonging to every religious sect amongst

us, has been searched, in order to find fitting and appropriate words, wherein to utter fitting and appropriate thoughts on this sacred theme. But, in all cases, the search has been made in vain. I think I hazard nothing in saying that there is not a single psalm or hymn, in any devotional book of psalms and hymns, to be found in our churches, which presents the faintest outline of this great subject, in its social, moral and religious departments, or in its bearing upon the future happiness of its objects. On these occasions, the officiating clergyman has looked through book and index, again and again, to make a suitable selection; he has then handed the book to me, and I have done the same,—the audience all the while waiting, and wondering at the delay,—and at last, as our only resource, we have been obliged to select some piece that had the word "child" or the word "young" in it, and make it do.

In contrast with this fact, think of the size of a complete collection of Bacchanal songs, or of martial music;—these would make libraries; but the Muse of education is yet to be born.

In regard to all other subjects, histories have been written. The facts pertaining to their origin and progress have been collected; their principles elucidated; their modes and processes detailed. As early as the time of Cato, there was the history of agriculture. In modern times we have the history of the silk-worm, the history of cotton, the history of rice and of tobacco, and the history of the mechanic arts; but, in the English language, we have no history of education. Indeed, even now, we can scarcely be said to have any treatise, showing at what favoring hours the sentiments of virtue should be instilled into young hearts; or by what processes of care and nurture, or by what neglect, the chrysales of human spirits are evolved into angels or demons.

And while almost nothing has been written or taught, on this subject, by the great guides and dictators of the human mind; how has it been with the lawgivers of the race, and the founders of its social and political institutions? Hitherto there has existed but very little freedom of thought and action among mankind. Laws and institutions have been moulds, wherein the minds of men have been cast,—almost with mechanical precision. The reciprocal action between the institutions of society, on the one side, and the successive generations of men, on the other, has been this: The generations of men have been born into institutions already prepared and consolidated. During their years of minority, the institutions shaped their minds; and when they arrived at majority, they upheld the institutions to which they had been conformed, and, in their turn, bequeathed them. Sometimes, indeed, a mighty spirit has arisen, too large to be compressed within the mould of existing institutions, or too unmalleable and infusible to be beaten or molten into their shape. Then came a death-struggle. If the institutions prevailed over the individual, he was crushed, annihilated. If the individual triumphed in the unequal contest, he dashed the mould of the institutions in pieces, prepared another in his own likeness, and left it behind him to shape the minds of coming generations. Such men were Aristotle, in regard to metaphysics; Alfred, in regard to law; Bacon, in regard to philosophy; Luther and Calvin, in regard to religious faith.

Both in Europe and in this country, scientific institutions have been founded, and illustrious men, during successive ages, have poured the collected light of their effulgent minds upon other departments of science and of art,—upon language, astronomy, light, heat, electricity, tides,

meteors, and so forth, and so forth. Such were the Royal Academy of Sciences, in Paris, founded in 1660; the Royal Society of England, founded in 1663; and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, founded in 1780;—and what ponderous volumes of reports, essays, and transactions, they have published! But when or where have a nation's sages met in council, to investigate the principles and to discuss the modes, by which that most difficult and delicate work upon earth,—the education of a human soul,—should be conducted? Yet what is there in philology, or the principles of universal grammar; what is there in the ebb and flow of tides, in the shooting of meteors, or in the motions of the planetary bodies;—what is there, in fine, in the corporeal and insensate elements of the earth beneath, or of the firmament above, at all comparable in importance to those laws of growth and that course of training, by which the destiny of mortal and immortal spirits is at least foretokened, if not foredoomed?

So, too, in regard to those ancient and renowned literary institutions, which have been established and upheld by the foremost nations of Christendom;—the Sorbonne in France; the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and Edinburgh, in Great Britain; and the universities and colleges of this country;—the grand object of all these institutions has been,—not to educate the general, the common mass of mind,—but to rear up men for the three learned professions, (as they are called,) Physic, Law, and Divinity. For this comparatively narrow and special purpose, vast legislative endowments and munificent private donations have been made, and the highest talents have been culled from the community, for presidentships and professorships.

The three learned professions, it is true, represent the three great departments of human inter-

ests;—the Medical representing the body, or corporeal part, through whose instrumentality alone can the spirit make itself manifest;—the Legal profession being designed to establish social rights and to redress social wrongs, in regard to property, person and character;—and the Theological to guide and counsel us, in regard to our moral and religious concernments both for time and for eternity. But all the learning of all the professions can never be an adequate substitute for common knowledge, or remedy for common ignorance. These professions are necessary for our general enlightenment, for guidance in difficult cases, and for counsel at all times; but they never should aim to supersede, they never can supersede our own individual care, forethought, judgment, responsibility. Yet, how little is this truth regarded! How imperfectly do we live up to its requirements! In respect to the medical profession, we are this year, this day, and every day, sending young men to college, and from college to the medical school, that they may acquire some knowledge of human diseases and their remedies; but, at the same time, we are neglecting to educate and train our children in accordance with the few and simple laws upon which health depends, and which every child might be easily led to know and to observe;—and the consequence is, that we are this year, this day and every day, sowing, in the constitutions of our children, the seeds of innumerable diseases; so that the diseases will be ready for the doctors quite as soon as the doctors are ready for the diseases. Indeed, before the doctor confronts the disease, or while he is pondering over it, how often does death step in and snatch the victim away.

At what vast expense, both of time and money, is the legal profession trained, and the judicial

tribunals of the land supported. Two or three, or half a dozen years, spent in preparing for college, four years at college, and two or three years at a law school, or elsewhere, as a qualification to practise in the courts; then, the maintenance of the courts themselves; the salaries of judges, and of prosecuting officers; the expense of jurors, grand-jurors and witnesses; the amount of costs and counsel fees; the vast outlay for prisons, jails, and houses of correction;—and all this enormous expenditure, in order to adjust disputes, rectify mistakes, and punish offences, nine tenths of which would have been prevented, by a degree of common knowledge easily taught, and of common honesty, to which all children, with scarcely an exception, might be trained.

When the law of hereditary distempers shall be as profoundly investigated as the law which regulates the hereditary transmission of property, then may we expect some improvement in the health and robustness and beauty of the race. Compare all the books written on the transmission from parents to children of physical or moral qualities, with the law-books and treatises on the descent of estates. When will the current of public opinion, or the stimulus of professional emolument, create a desire to understand the irreversible ordinances and statutes of Nature, on this class of subjects, as strong as that which now carries a student at law through Fearne on Contingent Remainders?—a book which requires the same faculty for divining ideas, that Champollion had for deciphering Egyptian Hieroglyphics.

And how is it with the clerical profession? They enter upon the work of reforming the human character,—not at the earlier stages of its development,—but when it has arrived at, or is approaching to, its maturity;—a period, when, by universal consent, it has become almost unchange-

able by secondary causes. They are reformers, I admit, but in regard to any thing that *grows*, one right *former* will accomplish more than a thousand *re*-formers. It is their sacred mission to prepare a vineyard for the Lord, to dress it, and make it fruitful; but I think no one will say that an army of laborers, sent into a vineyard at mid-summer, when brambles and thorns have already choked the vines, and the hedges have been broken down, and the unclean beasts of the forest have made their lair therein;—I think no one will say that an army of laborers, entering the vineyard at such a time, will be able to make it yield so abundant a harvest as one faithful, skilful servant would do, who should commence his labors in the spring-time of the year.

The Constitution of the United States makes no provision for the education of the people; and in the Convention that framed it, I believe the subject was not even mentioned. A motion to insert a clause providing for the establishment of a national university, was voted down. I believe it is also the fact, that the Constitutions of only *three* of the thirteen original States made the obligation to maintain a system of Free Schools a part of their fundamental law.

On what grounds of reason or of hope, it may well be asked, did the framers of our National and State Constitutions expect, that the future citizens of this Republic would be able to sustain the institutions, or to enjoy the blessings, provided for them? And has not all our subsequent history shown the calamitous consequences of their failing to make provision for the educational wants of the nation? Suppose it had been provided, that no person should be a voter who could not read and write, and also that no State should be admitted into the Union which had not established a system of Free Schools for all its people;

would not our National history and legislation, our State administrations and policy, have felt the change through all their annals? Great and good men, though they were, yet this truth, now so plain and conspicuous, eluded their sagacity. They did not reflect that, in the common course of nature, all the learned and the wise and the virtuous are swept from the stage of action, almost as soon as they become learned and wise and virtuous; and that they are succeeded by a generation who come into the world wholly devoid of learning and wisdom and virtue. The parents may have sought out the sublimest truths, but these truths are nothing to the children, until their minds also shall have been raised to the power of grasping and of understanding them. The truths, indeed, are immortal, but the beings who may embrace them are mortal, and pass away, to be followed by new minds, ignorant, weak, erring, tossed hither and thither on the waves of passion. Hence, each new generation must learn all truth anew, and for itself. Each generation must be able to comprehend the principles, and must rise to the practice of the virtues, requisite to sustain the position of their ancestors; and the first generation which fails to do this, loses all, and comes to ruin not only for itself but for its successors.

At what time, then, by virtue of what means, is the new generation to become competent to take upon itself the duties of the old and retiring one? At which of Shakspeare's "Seven Ages," is the new generation expected to possess the ability to stand in the places of the departed? Allow that the vast concerns of our society must be submitted to a democracy,—still, shall they be submitted to the democracy of babyhood,—to those whose country, as yet, is the cradle, and whose universe, the nursery? Can you call in children

from trundling hoops and catching butterflies, organize them into "Young Men's Conventions," and propound for their decision the great questions of judicature and legislation, of civil, domestic, and foreign policy? Or, will you take the youth of the land, from sixteen to twenty-one years of age, in the heyday of their blood, with passions unappeasable in their cry for indulgence, and unquenchable by it; without experience, without sobriety of judgment; whose only notions of the complex structure of our government and of its various and delicate relations, have been derived from hearing a Fourth of July Oration; with no knowledge of this multiform world into which they have been brought, or of their dangers, duties and destiny, as men,—in one word, with no education,—and is it to such as these that the vast concernments of a nation's well-being can be safely intrusted? Safer, far safer, would it be to decide the great problems of legislation and jurisprudence, by a throw of dice; or, like the old Roman soothsayers, by the flight of birds. And even after one has passed the age of twenty-one, how is he any better fitted than before to perform the duties of a citizen, if no addition has been made to his knowledge, and if his passions have not been subjected to the control of reason and duty?

I adduce these extraordinary facts, in relation to the founders of our Republic, not in any spirit of disparagement or reprehension, but only as another proof in the chain of demonstration, to show in what relative esteem,—how low down in the social scale, this highest of all earthly subjects has been held,—and held in a Republic too, where we talk so much about foundations of knowledge and virtue.

And what was the first school established by Congress, after the formation of the general gov-

ernment? It was the Military Academy at West Point. This school is sustained at an annual expense of more than a hundred thousand dollars. It is the Normal School of War. As the object of the common Normal School is to teach teachers how to teach; so the object of this Academy is to teach killers how to kill. At this school, those delightful sciences are pursued which direct at what precise angle a cannon or a mortar shall be elevated, and what quantity and quality of gunpowder shall be used, in order to throw red-hot balls or bomb-shells a given distance, so as, by the one, to set a city on fire, and, by the other, to tear in pieces a platoon of men,—husbands, brothers, fathers. And while it is thought of sufficient importance to nominate the most learned men in the whole land, and to assemble them from the remotest quarters of the Union, to make an annual visit to this School of War, and to spend days and days in the minutest, severest examination of the pupils, to see if they have fully mastered their death-dealing sciences; it is not uncommon to meet with the opinion that our Common Schools need no committees and no examination.

Great efforts have been made in Congress to establish a Naval School, having in view the same benign and philanthropic purposes, for the ocean, which the Military School has for the land.

At Old Point Comfort, in Virginia, there now is, and for a long time has been, under the direction of the general government, what is called a "School for Practice," where daily experiments are tried to test the strength of ordnance, the explosive force of gunpowder, and the distance at which a Christian may fire at his brother Christian and be sure to kill him, and not waste his ammunition!

At selected points, throughout our whole country, the thousand wheels of mechanism are now playing; chemistry is at work in all her laboratories; the smelter, the forger, the founder in brass and iron, the prover of arms,—all are plying their daily tasks to prepare implements for the conflagration of cities and the destruction of human life. Occasionally, indeed, a Peace Society is organized; a few benevolent men assemble together to hear a discourse on the universal brotherhood of the race, the horrors of war and the blessings of peace; but their accents are lost in an hour, amid the never-ceasing din and roar of this martial enginery. And so the order and course of things will persist to be,—the ministers of the Gospel of Peace may continue to preach peace for eighteen centuries more, and still find themselves in the midst of war, or of all those passions by which war is engendered, unless the rising generation shall be educated to that strength and sobriety of intellect which shall dispel the insane illusions of martial glory; and unless they shall be trained to the habitual exercise of those sentiments of universal brotherhood for the race, which shall change the common heroism of battle into a horror and an abomination.

A deputation of some of the most talented and learned men of this country, has lately been sent to Europe, by the order and at the expense of the general government, to visit and examine personally, all the founderies, armories and noted fortifications, from Gibraltar to the Baltic;—to collect all knowledge about the forging of iron cannon and brass cannon, the tempering of swords, the management of steam-batteries, and so forth, and so forth,—to bring this knowledge home, that our government may be instructed and enlightened in the art—*to kill.* I have not heard that Congress proposes to establish any Normal School,

the immediate or the remote object of which shall be to teach "peace on earth and good will to men." "Go ye out into every nation and preach the gospel to every creature," has hitherto been practically translated, "Go ye out into every nation and kill or rob every creature." We are told that a celestial choir once winged its way from heaven to earth, on an errand of mercy and love; but for the communication of that message which burned in their hearts and melted from their tongues, they sought out no lengthened epic or long resounding pæan;—they chanted only that brief and simple strain, "Peace on earth and good will to men," as if to assure us that these were the selectest words in the dialect of heaven, and the choicest beat in all its music. But long since have these notes died away. O, when shall that song be renewed, and every tongue and nation upon earth unite their voices with those of angels in uplifting the heavenly strain!

Again I say, my friends, that the arraignment and denunciation of men is no part of my present purpose. I advert to these world-known facts, for the sole and simple object of showing how the subject of education stands, and has stood, in prosaic and poetic literature, in the refining arts, in history, and in the laws, institutions and opinions of men. I wish hereby to show its relative degradation, the inferiority of the rank assigned to it, as compared with all other interests, or with any other interest; and thus to exhibit the true reasons why, as yet, it has done so little for the renovation of the world. I have spoken only of the general current of events, of opinions and of practices common to mankind. In our own times, in such low estimation is this highest of all causes held, that in these days of conventions for all other objects of public interest,—when men go hundreds of miles to attend rail-road conventions,

and cotton conventions, and tobacco conventions; and when the delegates of political conventions* are sometimes counted, as Xerxes counted his army, by acres and square miles,—yet such has often been the dispersive effect upon the public of announcing a Common School Convention, and a Lecture on Education, that I have queried in my own mind whether, in regard to two or three counties, at least, in our own State, it would not be advisable to alter the law for quelling riots and mobs; and, instead of summoning sheriffs and armed magistrates and the *posse comitatus* for their dispersion, to put them to flight by making proclamation of a Discourse on Common Schools.

When we reflect upon all this, what surprises and grieves us most is, that so few men are surprised or grieved.

It has been my fortune, within the last few years, to visit schools in many of our sister States; and I have spared no efforts to make myself acquainted with the general system,—so far as any system exists,—adopted in them all. Although in one or two States the general plan of Public Instruction, owing to its more recent establishment, may have a few advantages over our own, yet there is not a single State in the Union whose whole system is at all comparable to that of Massachusetts, whether we consider its extent, its efficiency, or the general intelligence with which it is administered by the local authorities.† Dis-

* It was said that at the Young Men's Whig Convention, held at Baltimore, in May, 1844, there were *forty thousand* delegates in attendance.

† I believe this statement to have been strictly true at the time when it was written, (1841.) But, in some respects, it is no longer so. As it regards *efficiency, and the means of rapid improvement*, to say no more, the system of the State of New York now takes precedence of any in the Union. In addition to a State Superintendent of Common Schools, whose jurisdiction extends over them all, there are one or more Deputy Superintendents in each county, whose time is devoted to a visitation of the schools, to lecturing and diffusing information among the people, and so forth; and who make a report, once

proportionately, however, as we value this cause, it would be impossible to convict Massachusetts of such dereliction from duty as has been manifested by some of her sister States.

I think, for instance, that it would be impossible for our people to imitate the example of our neighbors, the inhabitants of Maine,—so long and so lately a part of ourselves,—where, in the year 1839, there was a general uprising of the whole population, and an appropriation, by an almost unanimous vote of the Legislature, of the sum of *eight hundred thousand dollars*, for the forcible rescue of certain outlands, or outwastes, claimed by Great Britain; while, for three successive sessions, some of the wisest and best men in that State have been striving, in vain, to obtain from that same Legislature the passage of a law authorizing school districts to purchase a school library, by levying a tax upon themselves for the purpose. In the memoirs of the Pickwick Club, it is related that they passed a unanimous vote, that any member of said club should be allowed to travel in any part of England, Scotland or Wales, and also to send whatever packages he might please, *always provided that said member should pay his own*

a year, or oftener, to the State Superintendent, respecting the condition of the schools within their respective counties. These Deputy Superintendents, generally speaking, are men of superior intelligence, practically acquainted with the business of school keeping and enthusiastically devoted to the duties of their office. We can imagine how efficient such a system must be, by supposing the existence of one or more intelligent school agents or officers, in each county of the State of Massachusetts, whose whole time should be devoted to visiting the schools, and to creating, in the minds of the people, a more adequate conception of their value.

There is a school library in every school district in the State of New York.

At the session of the legislature, in 1844, by a unanimous vote of both branches, the sum of $10,000 a year, for five years, was appropriated for the support of a Normal School. This was the crowning work. The school was opened at Albany, in December, 1844.

The State of New York now possesses every means and facility for the improvement of its Common Schools, which are possessed by any other State in the Union, and some which no other State enjoys.

expenses. But the Legislature of Maine would not allow their school districts to buy libraries, *even at their own cost!* What latent capacities for enjoyment and for usefulness, which will now lie dormant forever, might not that sum of *eight hundred thousand dollars* have opened for the people of that State, for their children and their children's children, had it been devoted by enlightened minds to worthy objects!

So, too, to give one more example, you will all recollect that outbreak of South Carolina against the general government, in 1832, when a few of the demi-gods of that State stamped upon the earth, and instantly it was covered with armed men; a State convention was held, laws were enacted, extending the jurisdiction of the courts and investing the Executive almost with a Dictator's power,—all under the pretext of defending State rights,—while, for the last thirty years, her whole appropriation for public schools has been less than *forty thousand dollars per annum;* and out of a white population, *of all ages*, of less than 270,000, there are more than 20,000, above the age of twenty years, who cannot read and write; —as though it could long be possible, without more efficient means for the general diffusion of intelligence and virtue, to have any State rights worth defending.

But, after a thorough and impartial inquisition, what verdict can we render, with a clear conscience, in regard to our own much-lauded Commonwealth? The Fathers of New England, it is true, soon after the settlement of the colony, established Common Schools,—for which let their names be honored above the names of all other men, while the world stands,—but one of their two avowed objects was, to enable the people to read the Scriptures in their native tongue. They seem to have forgotten that the extent of intel-

ligence, and the teachable and conscientious and reverential spirit with which one comes to that reading, is of paramount importance. The insane followers of Matthews, and of Joe Smith, can *read* the Scriptures. Years, too, before Common Schools were established for the many, a college was endowed to give a full and elaborate education to the few, who, according to the prevalent views of those times, were to be designated and set apart, even in youth, to fill the offices of church and state, in subsequent life. This, however, should be remembered in their praise, that the teachers selected for the schools, in the early years of the colony, were uniformly men of age, experience, learning and moral worth; and, according to the accustomed rates of compensation, in those days, they were fairly remunerated. In that age, no prudential committee man, or other officer,—by whatever name he might have been called,—was seen groping about through all the colonies, after bats and moles to teach young eagles how to fly, because they would do it cheap. But is it *our* general practice to select, as teachers, only those who have arrived at mature age, who are known and respected, far and wide, for their experience, weight of character, dignity of deportment, and extent of intelligence? The rate of compensation, too, had fallen, before the year 1837 when the Board of Education was established, far below that of skilful artisans and mechanics, or even of the better class of operatives in manufacturing establishments. The common laborers on our farms, the journeymen in our shops, and the workpeople in our mills,—all have some fixed residence, some place enjoying the seclusion and invested with the sacred associations of home. Even the old-fashioned cobbler, who used to travel from house to house, carrying on his back his box of tools and his scraps of leather, has at last found

an abiding place;—*nobody but the schoolmaster is obliged to board round.* Nobody but the schoolmaster is put up at auction, and knocked off to the *lowest bidder!* I think this use of the word "*lowest*" must oftentimes vivify a teacher's grammatical notions of the superlative degree. Think you, my friends, there would be so many young men pressing forward into the profession of the law, if lawyers were put up at auction, and then had to *board round* among their clients?

Compare the salaries given to engineers, to superintendents of rail-roads, to agents and overseers of manufacturing establishments, to cashiers of banks, and so forth, with the customary rates of remuneration given to teachers. Yet, does it deserve a more liberal requital, does it require greater natural talents, or greater attainments, to run cotton or woollen machinery, or to keep a locomotive from running off the track, than it does to preserve this wonderfully-constructed and complicated machine of the human body in health and vigor; or to prevent the spiritual nature,—that vehicle which carries all our hopes,—from whirling deviously to its ruin, or from dashing madly forward to some fatal collision? Custom-house collectors and postmasters sometimes realize four, five or six thousand dollars a year from their offices, while as many hundreds are grudgingly paid to a school teacher.

The compensation which we give with the hand, is a true representation of the value which we affix in the mind; and how much more liberally and cordially do we requite those who prepare outward and perishable garments for the persons of our children, than those whose office it is to endue their spirits with the immortal vestments of virtue? Universally, the price-current of accomplishments ranges far above that of solid and enduring attainments. Is not the dancing-master,

who teaches our children to take the steps, better requited than he who teaches their feet not to go down to the chambers of death? Were the music-master as wretchedly rewarded and as severely criticised as the schoolmaster, would not his strains involuntarily run into the doleful and lugubrious? Strolling minstrels, catching the eye with grotesque dresses, and chanting unintelligible words, are feasted, fêted and garlanded; and when a European dancer, nurtured at the foul breast of theatrical corruption, visits our land, the days of idolatry seem to have returned;—wealth flows, the incense of praise rises, enthusiasm rages like the mad Bacchantes. It is said that Celeste received *fifty thousand dollars*, in this country, in one year, for the combined exhibition of skill and person; and that devotee to Venus, Fanny Ellsler, was paid the enormous sum of *sixty thousand dollars*, in three months, for the same meritorious consideration, or *value received.* In both these cases, a fair proportion was contributed in the metropolis of our own State. At the rate of compensation, at which a majority of the female teachers in Massachusetts have been rewarded for their exhausting toils, it would require more than twenty years' continued labor to equal the receipts of Fanny Ellsler for a single night! Thus, in our most populous places, and amongst people who profess to lead society, stands the relative supremacy of sense and soul, of heels and head. And I blush while I reflect, that amongst all the daughters of New England who witnessed the unreserved displays of these Cyprian women, there was not one to be found, in whose veins flowed the chaste blood of the Puritan mothers, prompting her to approach these female *sans culottes*, backwards, and perform for them the same friendly service, which, on a like necessity, the sons of Noah performed for him. And

although I would not silence one note in the burst of admiration with which our young men, who assume to be the leaders of fashion, respond to the charms of female beauty, agility, or grace; yet I do desire that, in paying their homage, they should distinguish between the Venus Celestial and the Venus Infernal!*

As I have before intimated, the relics, the symbols, the monuments, of whatever kind they may be, which a people has prepared to sustain or enshrine the objects of its interest or affections, furnish undesigned, and therefore demonstrative evidence of the relative estimation in which these objects were held. The dull and heavy Egyptians have left us the visible impress and emblem

* In discussing the propriety or impropriety of exhibiting live specimens of female nudity, before mixed assemblies of ladies and gentlemen,—especially when the spectacles are of the *ad libitum* sort, and where the actress is expected to acknowledge every round of applause by enlarging the field of vision,—I have sometimes been answered in the language of King Edward's celebrated saying, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," "Evil to him who thinks evil." One thing has tended to disgust me with this retort. I have never known it used, for this purpose, except by persons more or less deeply tainted with libertinism, during some part of their lives. I never knew it given by a man wholly free from reproach, in conduct and reputation, on the score of licentiousness.

One of the most striking things in the "Letters from Abroad," by Miss C. M. Sedgwick, is the uniform and energetic condemnation which that true American lady bestows upon opera-dancers, and the whole *corps de ballet*, for the public and shameless exhibition of their persons upon the stage. Have the young ladies of our cities a nicer sense of propriety, of modesty, and of all the elements of female loveliness, than this excellent author, who has written so much for their improvement, and who is herself so admirable an example of all feminine purity and delicacy? And have the young men of America a higher *ideal* of what belongs to a true gentleman,—to a man of lofty and noble nature, than a writer, who is so justly celebrated, in both hemispheres, for her pure and elevated conceptions of human character?

It is not with any harshness of feeling that I make another remark, but only in view of the natural consequences or tendencies of conduct; but it seems to me that, for a husband to accompany his wife, or a father his daughter, to such an exhibition, ought to be held a good plea in bar in all our courts of law, should the same husband or father afterwards appear as a prosecutor claiming damages, as the legal phraseology runs, "*for loss of service and pain of mind*," on account of the wife or daughter whom they had accompanied to such an exhibition.

of their minds, in their indistinct hieroglyphics, their ponderous architecture, and in their pyramids, which exhibit magnificence without taste, costliness without elegance, and power without genius. But the splendid temples, statues and arches of the Greeks; the massive aqueducts and horizon-seeking roads of the Romans, were only the outward and visible representations of their conceptions of ideal beauty, of grandeur and power. Amongst a people strongly drawn towards commerce, as the source of their supremacy and opulence, like the ancient Phenicians, or like the people of Great Britain or of the United States, at the present day, the art of ship-building is sure to be cultivated, and the finest specimens of naval architecture to be produced. So, if great reliance is placed upon an extensive inland traffic, then innavigable rivers will be made navigable, mountains of solid rock will be channelled, valleys filled, and what we have before called the everlasting hills will be removed to create facilities for internal transportation. In fine, our *works* are the visible embodiment and representation of our *feelings*. Thus, the Psalmist, referring to the unspeakably magnificent heavens, says:—they "declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work.'

Tried by this unerring standard in human nature, our *Schoolhouses* are a fair index or exponent of our interest in Public Education. Suppose, at this moment, some potent enchanter, by the waving of his magic wand, should take up all the twenty-eight hundred schoolhouses of Massachusetts, with all the little triangular and *non-descript* spots of earth whereon and wherein they have been squeezed,—whether sand bank, morass, bleak knoll, or torrid plain,—and, whirling them through the affrighted air, should set them all down, visibly, round about us, in this place; and

then should take us up into some watch-tower or observatory, where, at one view, we could behold the whole as they were encamped round about,—each one true to the point of compass which marked its nativity, each one retaining its own color or no-color, each one standing on its own heath, hillock or fen;—I ask, my friends, if, in this new spectacle under the sun, with its motley hues of red, gray and doubtful, with its windows sprinkled with patterns taken from Joseph's many-colored coat, with its broken chimneys, with its shingles and clapboards flapping and clattering in the wind, as if giving public notice that they were about to depart,—I ask, if, in this indescribable and unnameable group of architecture, we should not see the true image, reflection and embodiment of our own love, attachment and regard for Public Schools and Public Education, as, in a mirror, face answereth to face? But, however neglected, forgotten, forlorn, these edifices may be, yet within their walls is contained the young and blooming creation of God. In them are our hope, the hopes of the earth. There are gathered together what posterity shall look back upon, as we now look back upon heroes and sages and martyrs and apostles; or as we look back upon bandits and inquisitors and sybarites. Our dearest treasures do not consist in lands and tenements, in rail-roads and banks, in warehouses or in ships upon every sea; they are within those doors, beneath those humble roofs; and is it not our solemn duty to hold every other earthly interest subordinate to their welfare?

My friends, these points of contrast between our devotion to objects of inferior interest, and our comparative neglect of this transcendent cause, are as painful to me as they can be to any one. Among all that remain, I will mention but one class more. I ask you to look at the pecun-

lary appropriations, which, within a few years past, the State has made for the encouragement of outward and material interests, compared with what it has done, or rather refused to do, for the enlightenment and moral renovation of society, through a universal education of the people. Within the last three years, the treasury of the Commonwealth has dispensed a bounty of about twenty-five thousand dollars to encourage the growth of wheat,—and within the last two years, of about five thousand dollars for the culture of silk,—for those goods which perish with the using; while it has not contributed one cent towards satisfying the pressing demand for apparatus and libraries for our schools, by which the imperishable treasures of knowledge and virtue would be increased a hundred fold. The State has provided for the gratuitous distribution of a manual, descriptive of the art and processes of silk-culture, but made no provision for the distribution of any manual on that most difficult of all arts,—the art of Education,—as though silk-culture were more important and more difficult than soul-culture.

During the very last year, the State paid a Militia Bounty of thirty thousand dollars, to soldiers, for three or four trainings. Where are those trainings now? Where now, the net proceeds, the value received, the available, visible result, as exhibited in the advancement of society, or the promotion of human welfare? Could thirty thousand dollars have been distributed to sustain the sinking hearts of those females who keep school for a dollar a week, or for nine pence a day, should we not now be able to show some of its tangible fruits, and would not a transfer of the fund to such an object have illustrated quite as well the gallantry of the citizen soldier?

To the American Institute of Instruction, whose

noble object it is to improve the *race of children*, the State, after much importunity, has given the sum of three hundred dollars a year for five years, (fifteen hundred dollars,) while to Agricultural Societies formed for the purpose of improving the *breed of cattle* and a few other kindred objects, it has given from four thousand dollars to six thousand dollars a year, for about twenty years!

In the year 1834, the Legislature made provision for the prospective creation of a School Fund, to be formed from half the proceeds of wild lands in the State of Maine, and from the Massachusetts claim on the general government for militia services rendered during the last war. Through unexpected good fortune, about four hundred thousand dollars have been realized from these sources. Compare this bestowment, however, of a contingent sum,—a part of which was not regarded, at the time, as much better than a gift of half the proceeds of a lottery ticket, provided it should draw a prize,—with its prompt and magnificent encouragement of rail-roads. No sooner were the eyes of the State opened to the commercial importance of an internal communication with the West, than it forthwith bound itself to the amount of five millions of dollars, in aid of this merely corporeal and worldly enterprise.

One word more, and I will forbear any further to depict these painful contrasts;—I will forbear, not from lack of materials, but from faintness of spirit. Almost from year to year, through the whole period of our history, wealthy and benevolent individuals have risen up amongst us, who have made noble gifts for literary, charitable and religious purposes,—for public libraries, for founding professorships in colleges, for establishing scientific and theological institutions, for sending

abroad missionaries to convert the heathen,—some to one form of faith, some to another. For most of these objects the State has coöperated with individuals; often, it has given on its own account. It has bestowed immense sums upon the University at Cambridge, and Williams College, especially the former. It gave thirty thousand dollars to the Massachusetts General Hospital. It put ten thousand dollars into the Bunker Hill Monument, there to stand forever in mindless, insentient, inanimate granite. But while with such a bounteous heart and open hand, the State had bestowed its treasures for special, or local objects,—for objects circumscribed to a party or a class;—it had not, for two hundred years, in its parental and sovereign capacity, given any thing for universal education;—it had given nothing, as God gives the rain and the sunshine, to all who enter upon the great theatre of life.

It was under these circumstances, that a private gentleman, to his enduring honor, offered the sum of ten thousand dollars, on condition that the State would add an equal amount, to aid Teachers of our Common Schools in obtaining those qualifications which would enable them the more successfully to cultivate the divinely wrought and infinitely valuable capacities of the human soul. The hope and expectation were, that these teachers would go abroad over the State, and by the improved *modes* and *motives* which they would introduce into the schools, would be the means of conferring new, manifold and unspeakable blessings upon the rising generation, without any distinction of party or of denomination, of mental, or of physical complexion. This hope and expectation were founded upon the reasonableness of the thing, upon the universal experience of mankind in regard to all other subjects, and upon the well attested experience of several nations in regard to

this particular measure. The proposition was acceded to. This sum of twenty thousand dollars was placed at the disposal of the Board of Education, to carry the purposes of the donor and of the Legislature into effect. Institutions called Normal Schools were established. That their influence might be wholly concentrated upon the preparation of teachers for our Common Schools, the almost doubtful provision, that the learned languages should not be included in the list of studies taught therein, was inserted in the regulations for their government;—not because there was any hostility or indifference towards those languages, but because it was desirable to prepare teachers for our Common Schools, rather than to furnish facilities for those who are striving to become teachers of Select Schools, High Schools, and Academies.

The call was responded to by the very class of persons to whom it was addressed. Not the children of the rich, not the idle and luxurious, not those in pursuit of gaudy accomplishments, came; but the children of the poor,—the daughter of the lone widow whose straitened circumstances forbade her to send to costly and renowned seminaries,—the young man came from his obscure cottage home, where for years his soul had been on fire with the love of knowledge and the suppressed hope of usefulness;—some accounted the common necessaries of life as superfluities, and sold them, that they might participate in these means of instruction;—some borrowed money and subsidized futurity for the same purpose, while others submitted to the lot, still harder to a noble soul, of accepting charity from a stranger's hand. They came, they entered upon their work with fervid zeal, with glowing delight, with that buoyancy and inspiration of hope which none but the young and the poor can ever feel.

But alas! while this noble enterprise was still in its bud and blossom, and before it was possible that any fruits should be matured from it, it was assailed. In the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, an attempt was made to abolish the Normal Schools, to disperse the young aspirants who had resorted to them for instruction, and crush their hopes; and to throw back into the hands of the donor, the money which he had given, and which the State had pledged its faith to appropriate,—the first and only gift which had ever been made for elevating and extending the education of all the children in the Commonwealth.

In the document which purports to set forth the reasons for this measure, the doctrine that "the art of teaching is a peculiar art," is gainsaid. It is boldly maintained "that every person who has himself undergone a process of instruction, must acquire by that very process the art of instructing others." And in this country, where, without a higher standard of qualification for teachers, without more universal and more efficient means of education than have ever elsewhere existed, all our laws and constitutions are weaker barriers against the assaults of human passion than is a bulrush against the ocean's tide;—in this country, that document affirmed that "perhaps it is not desirable that the business of keeping these schools, [the Common Schools,] should become a distinct and separate profession."

Conceding to the originators and advocates of this scheme for abolishing the Normal Schools, that they were sincerely friendly to the cause of Common Schools, how strikingly does it exhibit the low state of public sentiment in regard to these schools. Those claiming to be their friends, —men, too, who had been honored by their fellow-citizens with a seat in the Legislature,—thought

it unnecessary, even in this country, to elevate the teacher's office into a profession!

I will never cease to protest that I am not bringing forward these facts for the purpose of criminating the motives, or of invoking retribution upon the conduct of any one. My sole and exclusive object is to show to what menial rank the majesty of this cause has been degraded;—to show that the affections of this community are not clustered around it; that it is not the treasure which their hearts love and their hands guard;—in fine, that the sublime idea of a generous and universal education, as the appointed means, in the hands of Providence, for restoring mankind to a greater similitude to their Divine Original, is but just dawning upon the public mind.

But I have done. Let this rapid survey of our condition, by showing us how little has been done, convince us how much remains to be accomplished. Instead of repining at the inadequate conceptions of our predecessors, let us rejoice and shout aloud for joy, that we have been brought to a point, where the vista of a more glorious future opens upon our view. Let us dilate our spirits to a capacity for embracing the magnitude and grandeur of the work we have undertaken. Let us strengthen our resolutions, till difficulty and obstruction shall be annihilated before them. If the ascent before us is high, all the more glorious will be the prospect from the summit; if it is toilsome, our sinews shall grow mightier by every struggle to overcome it. If it is grateful to recognize blessings which have been won for us by our ancestors, it is more noble in us to win blessings for posterity,—for God has so constituted the soul, that the generous feelings of self-sacrifice are infinitely sweeter and more enduring than the selfish pleasures of indulgence. Although, as friends of this cause, we are few and scattered, and sur-

rounded by an unsympathizing world, yet, let us toil on, each in his own sphere, whatever that sphere may be, nor "bate one jot of heart or hope." Although we now labor, like the coral insects at the bottom of the ocean, uncheered, unheard, unseen, with the tumultuous waters of interest and of passion raging high above us, yet let us continue to labor on,—for, at length, like them, we will bring a rock-built continent to the surface, and upon that surface God will plant his Paradise anew, and people it with men and women of nobler forms and of diviner beauty than any who now live,—with beings whose minds shall be illumined by the light of knowledge, and whose hearts shall be hallowed by the sanctity of religion.

For the fulfilment, then, of these holy purposes, what labors shall we undertake, and in what resolutions shall we persevere unto the end? —for labor and perseverance are indispensable means for the production of any good by human hands.

In the first place, the education of the whole people, in a republican government, can never be attained without the consent of the whole people. Compulsion, even though it were a desirable, is not an available instrument. Enlightenment, not coercion, is our resource. The nature of education must be explained. The whole mass of mind must be instructed in regard to its comprehensive and enduring interests. We cannot drive our people up a dark avenue, even though it be the right one; but we must hang the starry lights of knowledge about it, and show them not only the directness of its course to the goal of prosperity and honor, but the beauty of the way that leads to it. In some districts, there will be but a single man or woman, in some towns, scarcely half-a-dozen men or women, who have espoused this noble enterprise. But whether there be half-a-

dozen or but one, they must be like the little leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal. Let the intelligent visit the ignorant, day by day, as the oculist visits the blind man, and detaches the scales from his eyes, until the living sense leaps to the living light. Let the zealous seek contact and communion with those who are frozen up in indifference, and thaw off the icebergs wherein they lie imbedded. Let the love of beautiful childhood, the love of country, the dictates of reason, the admonitions of conscience, the sense of religious responsibility, be plied, in mingled tenderness and earnestness, until the obdurate and dark mass of avarice and ignorance and prejudice shall be dissipated by their blended light and heat.

But a duty more noble, as well as more difficult and delicate than that of restoring the suspended animation of society, will devolve upon the physician and friend of this cause. In its largest sense, no subject is so comprehensive as that of education. Its circumference reaches around and outside of, and therefore embraces all other interests, human and divine. Hence, there is danger that whenever any thing practical,—any real change,—is proposed, all classes of men will start up and inquire, how the proposed change will affect some private interest, or some idolized theory or opinion of theirs. Suppose a short-sighted, selfish man to be interested as manufacturer, author, compiler, copyright owner, vender, pedlar, or puffer, of any of the hundreds of school-books,—from the reading book that costs a dollar, to the primer that costs four pence,—whose number and inconsistencies infest our schools, and whose expense burdens our community,—then he will inquire which one of all these books will be likely to meet with countenance or disfavor, in an adjudication upon their merits; and he will strive to turn the scales which

confessedly hold the great interests of humanity, one way or the other, as their inclination will promote or oppose the success of his reading book or his primer. So one, who has entered the political arena, not as a patriot, but as a partisan, will decide upon any new measure by its supposed bearing upon the success of his faction or cabal, and not by its tendency to advance the welfare of the body politic. In relation, too, to a more solemn subject,—how many individuals there are belonging to the hundred conflicting forms of religious faith, which now stain and mottle the holy whiteness of Christianity, who will array themselves against all plans for the reform or renovation of society, unless its agents and instruments are of their selection. And so of all the varied interests in the community,—industrial, literary, political, spiritual. Whatever class this great cause may touch, or be supposed likely to touch, there will come forth from that class, active opponents; or, what may not be less disastrous, selfish and indiscreet friends. I have known the carpenter and the mason belonging to the same school district, change sides and votes on the expediency of erecting a new schoolhouse, after it had been determined, contrary to expectation, to construct it of brick instead of wood. I have known a bookmaker seek anxiously to learn the opinions of the Board of Education respecting his book, in order to qualify himself to decide upon the expediency of its having been established.

How then, I ask, is this great interest to sustain itself, amid these disturbing forces of party and sect and faction and clan? how is it to navigate with whirlwinds above and whirlpools below, and rocks on every side?

In the first place, in regard to mere secular and business interests, we are to do no man wrong; we are to show by our deeds, rather than by our

words, that we are seeking no private, personal aims, but public ends by equitable means. We are to show that our object is to diffuse light and knowledge, and to leave those who can best bear these tests, to profit most by their diffusion. Let us here teach the lessons of justice and impartiality on what, in schools, is called the *exhibitory* method; that is, by an actual exhibition of the principle we would inculcate; and as, for the untaught schoolboy, we bring out specimens, and models and objects, and give practical illustrations by apparatus and diagram to make him acquainted with the various branches of study; so, in the great school of the world, let us illustrate the virtues of generosity, magnanimity, equity and self-sacrifice, by the shining example of our acts and lives.

And again; in regard to those higher interests which the politician and the theologian feel called upon to guard and superintend, let us show them that, in supporting a system of Public Instruction, adapted to common wants and to be upheld by common means, we will not encroach one hair's breadth upon the peculiar province of any party or any denomination. But let us never cease to reiterate, and urge home upon the consideration of all political parties and religious denominations, that, in order to gain any useful ally to their cause, or worthy convert to their faith, *they must first find a* MAN,—not a statue, not an automaton, not a puppet, but a free, a thinking, an intelligent soul; —a being possessed of the attributes as well as the form of humanity. For, what can the enlightened advocate of any doctrine do, if he is compelled to address brutish souls, through adders' ears? How much can the senator or the ambassador of Christ accomplish, in convincing or in reforming mankind, if they are first obliged to fish up their subjects from the fetid slough of sensualism, or to excavate

them from beneath thick layers of prejudice, where, if I may express myself in geological language, they lie buried below the granite formation. In expounding the great problems of civil polity, or the momentous questions pertaining to our immortal destinies, how much can they effect, while obliged to labor upon men whose intellects are so halting and snail-paced, that they can no more traverse the logical distance between premises and conclusion, in any argument, than their bodies could leap the spaces between the fixed stars? As educators, as friends and sustainers of the Common School system, our great duty is to prepare these living and intelligent souls; to awaken the faculty of thought in all the children of the Commonwealth; to give them an inquiring, outlooking, forthgoing mind; to impart to them the greatest practicable amount of useful knowledge; to cultivate in them a sacred regard to truth; to keep them unspotted from the world, that is, uncontaminated by its vices; to train them up to the love of God and the love of man; to make the perfect example of Jesus Christ lovely in their eyes; and to give to all so much religious instruction as is compatible with the rights of others and with the genius of our government,—leaving to parents and guardians the direction, during their school-going days, of all special and peculiar instruction respecting politics and theology; and at last, when the children arrive at years of maturity, to commend them to that inviolable prerogative of private judgment and of self-direction, which, in a Protestant and a Republican country, is the acknowledged birth-right of every human being.

But sterner trials than any I have yet mentioned await the disciples of this sacred apostleship. The strong abuses that have invaded us will not be complimented into retirement; they

will not be *bowed out* of society; but as soon as they are touched, they will bristle all over with armor, and assail us with implacable hostility. While doing good, therefore, we must consent to suffer wrong. Such is human nature, that the introduction of every good cause adds another chapter to the Book of Martyrs. Though wise as serpents, yet there are adders who will not hear us; and though harmless as doves, yet for that very harmlessness will the vultures more readily stoop upon us. We shall not, indeed, be literally carried to the stake, or burned with material fires; but pangs keener than these, and more enduring, will be made to pierce our breasts. Our motives will be maligned, our words belied, our actions falsified. A reputation, for whose spotlessness and purity, we may, through life, have resisted every temptation and made every sacrifice, will be blackened; and a character,—perhaps our only precious possession wherewith to requite the love of family and friends,—will be traduced, calumniated, vilified; and, if deemed sufficiently conspicuous to attract public attention, held up, in the public press, perhaps in legislative halls, to common scorn and derision. What then! Shall we desert this glorious cause? Shall we ignobly sacrifice immortal good to mortal ease? No; never! But let us meet opposition in the spirit of him who prophetically said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." For those who oppose and malign us, our revenge shall be, to make their children wiser, better, and happier than themselves. If we ever feel the earthly motives contending with the heavenly, in our bosoms,—selfishness against duty, sloth against enduring and ennobling toil, a vicious contentment against aspirings after higher and attainable good,—let us not suffer the earth-born to

vanquish the immortal. What, though it cannot be said,

> "A cloud of witnesses around,
> Hold us in full survey,"

yet the voiceless approval of conscience outweighs the applauses of the world, and will outlast the very air and light, through which the eulogiums of mankind or the memorials of their homage, can be manifested to us.

What, too, though we cannot complete or perfect the work in our own age. For the consummation of such a cause, a thousand years are to be regarded only as a day. We know that the Creator has established an indissoluble connection between our conduct and its consequences. We know that the sublime order of his Providence is sustained, by evolving effects from causes. We know that, within certain limits, he has intrusted the preparation of causes to our hands; and, therefore, we know, that just so far as he has committed this preparation or adjustment of causes to us, he has given us power over effects;—he has given us power to modify or turn the flow of events for coming ages. As the apostles and martyrs and heroes, who lived centuries ago, have modified the events which happen to us, so have we the power to modify the events which shall happen to our posterity. We are not laboring, then, for three score and ten years only, but, for aught we know, for three score and ten centuries, or myriads of centuries. Through these immutable relations of cause and effect,—of evolution, transmission and reproduction,—our conduct will project its consequences through all the eras of coming time. Though our life, therefore, is but as a vapor which passeth away, yet we have power to strike the deepest chords of human welfare, and to give them vibrations which shall

sound onward forever. Corresponding with this stupendous order of events, we are endowed with a faculty of mind, by which we can recognize and appreciate our power over the fortunes and destinies of distant times. By the aid of this faculty, we can see that whatever we undertake and prosecute, with right motives and on sound principles, will not return to us void, but will produce its legitimate fruits of beneficence. On this faculty, then, as on eagles' wings, let us soar beyond the visible horizon of time; let us survey the prospect of redoubling magnificence, which, from age to age, will open and stretch onward, before those whose blessed ministry it is to improve the condition of the young; let our thoughts wander up and down among the coming centuries, and partake, by anticipation, of the enjoyments which others shall realize. If we ever seem to be laboring in vain,—if our spirits are ever ready to faint, amid present obstruction and hostility,—then, through this faculty of discerning what mighty results Nature and Providence will mature from humble efforts, let us look forward, in faith, and we shall behold this mighty cause emerging from its present gloom and obscurity, expanding and blossoming out into beauty, and ripening into the immortal fruits of wisdom and holiness; and as we gaze upon the glorious scene, every faculty within us shall be vivified, and endued with new and unwonted energy.

What, then, though our words and deeds seem now to be almost powerless and hopeless; what though bands of noble followers should rise up in our places, to be succeeded again and again by others, whose labors and sacrifices shall seem to fall and perish like the autumnal leaves of the forest;—yet, like the annual shedding of that foliage, which, for uncounted centuries, has been gradually deepening the alluvium, throughout

the vast solitudes of the Mississippi valley, increasing its depth and its richness, so shall the product of our labors accumulate in value and in amount, until, at last, beneath the hand of some more fortunate cultivator, it shall yield more abundant harvests of excellence, and righteousness and happiness, than had ever before luxuriated in the "seed-field of Time."

LECTURE VI.

ON DISTRICT SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

I PROPOSE, in the following lecture, to consider the expediency of establishing a School Library in the several School Districts of the State.

The idea of a Common School Library is a modern one. It originated in the State of New York. In the year 1835, a law was passed by the Legislature of that State, authorizing its respective school districts to raise, by tax, the sum of twenty dollars the first year, and ten dollars in any subsequent year, for the purchase of a Common School Library. No inducement was held out to the districts to make the purchase, but only a mere power granted; and the consequence was, that for three years this law remained almost a dead letter upon the pages of the statute book. But in the year 1838, Governor Marcy, in his inaugural address to the Legislature, recommended the appropriation of a part of the income of the United States deposit fund, or surplus revenue, (so called,) to this object. The recommendation was adopted, and the sum of $55,000 for three years, was set apart to be applied by the districts to the purchase of a District School Library. The *towns* were also required to raise an equal sum, to be united with the former, and to be applied in the same way.*

* By a law of 1839, this provision for *three*, was extended to *five* years; and by a law of 1843, it was made perpetual, with the following modifications: Whenever the number of children in a district, between

How much more does such an act of permanent usefulness redound to the honor of a Governor or a Legislature, than those party contests which occupy so much of public attention for a few days or months, but are then forgotten, or are only remembered to be lamented or condemned!

By the law of April 12, 1837, the Legislature of Massachusetts authorized each school district in the State to raise, by tax, a sum not exceeding thirty dollars for the first year, and ten dollars for any subsequent year, for the purchase of a library and apparatus for the schools. Few districts, however, availed themselves of this power; and, up to the close of the year 1839, there were but about fifty libraries in all the Common Schools of Massachusetts.

Being convinced of the necessity, and foreseeing the benefits, of libraries in our schools, I submitted to the Board of Education, on the 27th day of March, 1838, a written proposition on that subject. In that communication it was proposed that the Board itself should take measures for the preparation of such a Common School Library, as should be adapted to the wants of the schools, and should at the same time be free from objection on account of partisan opinions in politics, or sectarian views in religion. I had been led to suppose that one of the principal reasons why so few libraries had been purchased, under the law of 1837, was the jealousy entertained against each other, by members of different political parties and of different religious denominations. Though

the ages of five and sixteen years, exceeds fifty, and the number of volumes in the library shall exceed one hundred and twenty-five; or when the number of children in a district, between the same ages, is fifty, or less, and the number of volumes belonging to the library shall exceed one hundred, then the district may appropriate the whole, or any part of its distributive share of the "library money" "to the purchase of maps, globes, blackboards, or other scientific apparatus, for the use of the school."

sensible men, and friends of education, almost without exception, were earnest in their desires for a library, yet they either had fears of their own, or encountered apprehension in others, that the public money devoted to this purpose of general utility, might be perverted, in the hands of partisans, to the furtherance of sinister ends. The proposition submitted to the Board, as above stated, was accompanied by guards designed to obviate these difficulties. It was favorably received, and immediately acted upon.

Being convinced, however, that nothing could be effected towards the accomplishment of so grand an object, except by going before the people with indubitable facts and irresistible arguments, I set myself to the work of making extensive and minute inquiries throughout the State, respecting the number of public libraries, the number of volumes which each contained, their estimated value, the general character of the books, and also the number of persons who had a right of access to them. I obtained returns from all but sixteen towns, which, being small, had an aggregate population of only 20,966. The result exceeded my worst apprehensions. I found that there were but 299 social libraries in the State. The number of volumes they contained was 180,028. Their estimated value $191,538. The number of proprietors, or persons having access to them, in their own right, was only 25,705.

In addition to the above, there were, in the State, from ten to fifteen *town* libraries,—that is, libraries to which all the citizens of the town had a right of access. These contained, in the aggregate, from three to four thousand volumes, and their estimated value was about $1400. There were also about fifty school district libraries, containing about ten thousand volumes, and worth, by estimation, about $3200 or $3300. Fifteen of

these were in Boston. The number of Public Schools in the State, at that time, was 3,014.

A few of the incorporated academies had small libraries.

There were also a few circulating libraries in different parts of the State,—out of the city of Boston, perhaps twenty,—but it would be charitable to suppose that, on the whole, this class of libraries does as much good as harm.

Of all the social libraries in the State, thirty-six, containing 81,881 volumes, valued at $130,-055, and owned by 8,885 proprietors, or share-holders, belonged to the city of Boston.

It appeared, then, that the books belonging to the public social libraries, in the city of Boston, constituted almost one half, in number, of all the books in the social libraries of the State, and more than two thirds of all in value; and yet only about one tenth part of the population of the city had any right of access to them.

I have said above that the whole number of proprietors, or share-holders, in all the social libraries in the State was 25,705. Now, supposing that each proprietor or share-holder, in these social libraries, represents, on an average, four persons, (and this, considering the number of share-holders who are not heads of families, is probably a full allowance,) the population represented by them, as enjoying the benefits of these libraries, would be only a small fraction over one hundred thousand; and this, strange and alarming as it may seem, would leave a population, in the State, of more than six hundred thousand, who have no right of participation in those benefits.

I omit here, as not having an immediate connection with my present purpose, to give an account of the libraries belonging to the colleges and other literary and scientific institutions in the State. A detailed account of these may be found

in my Third Annual Report to the Board of Education.

Do not the above facts show a most extraordinary and wide-spread deficiency of books in our Commonwealth?

But even where books exist, another question arises, hardly less important than the preceding, as to the suitableness or adaptation of the books to the youthful mind. One general remark applies to the existing libraries almost without exception; —the books were written for men, and not for children. The libraries, too, have been collected by men for their own amusement or edification. There is no hazard, therefore, in saying, that they contain very few books, appropriate for the reading of the young, either in the subjects treated of, the intellectual manner in which those subjects are discussed, or the moral tone that pervades the works.*

* As descriptive of the general character of the public libraries now existing in the State, I give the following extract from my Third Annual Report:—

The next question respects the character of the books, composing the libraries, and their adaptation to the capacities and mental condition of children and youth. In regard to this point, there is, as might be expected, but little diversity of statement. Almost all the answers concur in the opinion, that the contents of the libraries are not adapted to the intellectual and moral wants of the young,—an opinion, which a reference to the titles, in the catalogues, will fully sustain. With very few exceptions, the books were written for adults, for persons of some maturity of mind, and possessed, already, of a considerable fund of information; and, therefore, they could not be adapted to children, except through mistake. Of course, in the whole, collectively considered, there is every kind of books; but probably no other kind, which can be deemed of a useful character, occupies so much space upon the shelves of the libraries, as the historical class. Some of the various histories of Greece and Rome; the History of Modern Europe, by Russell; of England, by Hume and his successors; Robertson's Charles V.; Mavor's Universal History; the numerous Histories of Napoleon, and similar works, constitute the staple of many libraries. And how little do these books contain, which is suitable for children! How little do they record, but the destruction of human life, and the activity of those misguided energies of men, which have hitherto almost baffled the beneficent intentions of Nature for human happiness! Descriptions of battles, sackings of cities, and the captivity of nations, follow each other, with the

Now the object of a Common School Library is to supply these great deficiencies. Existing

quickest movement, and in an endless succession. Almost the only glimpses which we catch, of the education of youth, present them, as engaged in martial sports, and in mimic feats of arms, preparatory to the grand tragedies of battle ;—exercises and exhibitions, which, both in the performer and the spectator, cultivate all the dissocial emotions, and turn the whole current of the mental forces into the channel of destructiveness. The reader sees inventive genius, not employed in perfecting the useful arts, but exhausting itself in the manufacture of implements of war. He sees rulers and legislators, not engaged in devising comprehensive plans for universal welfare, but in levying and equipping armies and navies, and extorting taxes to maintain them, thus dividing the whole mass of the people into the two classes of slaves and soldiers ; enforcing the degradation and servility of tame animals, upon the former, and cultivating the ferocity and blood-thirstiness of wild animals, in the latter. The highest honors are conferred upon men, in whose rolls of slaughter the most thousands of victims are numbered ; and seldom does woman emerge from her obscurity—indeed, hardly should we know that she existed—but for her appearance, to grace the triumphs of the conqueror. What a series of facts would be indicated, by an examination of all the treaties of peace, which history records ! they would appear like a grand index to universal plunder. The inference which children would legitimately draw, from reading like this, would be, that the tribes and nations of men had been created, only for mutual slaughter, and that they deserved the homage of posterity, for the terrible fidelity with which their mission had been fulfilled. Rarely do these records administer any antidote against the inhumanity of the spirit they instil. In the immature minds of children, unaccustomed to consider events, under the relation of cause and effect, they excite the conception of magnificent palaces or temples, for bloody conquerors to dwell in, or in which to offer profane worship for inhuman triumphs, without a suggestion of the bondage and debasement of the myriads of slaves, who, through lives of privation and torture, were compelled to erect them ; they present an exciting picture of long trains of plundered wealth, going to enrich some city or hero, without an intimation, that, by industry and the arts of peace, the same wealth could have been earned, more cheaply than it was plundered ; they exhibit the triumphal return of warriors, to be crowned with honors worthy of a god, while they take the mind wholly away from the carnage of the battle-field, from desolated provinces, and a mourning people. In all this, it is true, there are many examples of the partial and limited virtue of patriotism ; but few, only, of the complete virtue of philanthropy. The courage, held up for admiration, is generally of that animal nature, which rushes into danger, to inflict injury upon another; but not of that Divine quality, which braves peril, for the sake of bestowing good—attributes, than which there are scarcely any two in the souls of men, more different, though the baseness of the former is so often mistaken for the nobleness of the latter. Indeed, if the past history of our race is to be much read by children, it should be re-written ; and, while it records those events, which have contravened all the principles of social policy, and violated all the laws of morality and religion, there should, at least, be some recognition of the great truth, that, among nations, as among individuals, the high-

libraries are owned by the rich, or by those who are in comfortable circumstances. The Common School Library will reach the poor. The former were prepared for adult and educated minds; the latter is to be adapted to instruct young and unenlightened ones. By the former, books are collected in great numbers, at a few places, having broad deserts between; by the latter, a few good books are to be sent into every school district in the State, so that not a child shall be born in our beloved Commonwealth, who shall not have a collection of good books accessible to him at all times, and free of expense, within half an hour's walk of his home, wherever he may reside.

My friends, I look upon this as one of the grandest moral enterprises of the age. The honor of first embodying this idea, in practice, belongs

est welfare of all can only be effected, by securing the individual welfare of each. There should be some parallel drawn, between the *historical* and the *natural* relations of the race, so that the tender and immature mind of the youthful reader may have some opportunity of comparing the right with the wrong, and some option of admiring and emulating the former, instead of the latter. As much of history now stands, the examples of right and wrong, whose nativity and residence are on opposite sides of the moral universe, are not merely brought and shuffled together, so as to make it difficult to distinguish between them; but the latter are made to occupy almost the whole field of vision, while the existence of the former is scarcely noticed. It is, as though children should be taken to behold, from afar, the light of a city on fire, and directed to admire the splendor of the conflagration, without a thought of the tumult, and terror, and death, reigning beneath it.

Another very considerable portion of these libraries, especially where they have been recently formed or replenished, consists of novels, and all that class of books, which is comprehended under the familiar designations of "fictions," "light reading," "trashy works," "ephemeral," or "bubble literature," &c. This kind of books has increased, immeasurably, within the last twenty years. It has insinuated itself into public libraries, and found the readiest welcome with people, who are not dependent upon libraries for the books they peruse. Aside from newspapers, I am satisfied, that the major part of the *unprofessional* reading of the community is of the class of books above designated. Amusement is the object,—mere *amusement*, as contradistinguished from instruction, in the practical concerns of life; as contradistinguished from those intellectual and moral impulses, which turn the mind, both while reading and after the book is closed, to observation, and comparison, and reflection, upon the great realities of existence.

to the State of New York; and how much more glorious is it than the honors of battle! The execution of this project will carry the elements of thought where they never penetrated before. It will scatter, free and abundant, the seeds of wisdom and virtue in the desert places of the land. It will prove as powerful an agent in the world of mind, as the use of steam has done in the world of matter.

I propose now to notice a few particulars, in which the usefulness of our schools will be so much enlarged in extent, and increased in efficiency, by means of a library, that they will become almost new institutions.

The idea which came down to us from our ancestors, and which has generally prevailed until within a few years, was, that Common District Schools are places where the mass of the children may learn to read, to write, and to cipher.

In regard to the first of these studies,—Reading,—how imperfect was the instruction given! Good reading may be considered under three heads,—the *mechanical*, or the ability to speak the names of words on seeing them; the *intellectual*, or a comprehension of an author's ideas; and the *rhetorical*, or the power of giving, by the tones and inflexions of the voice and other natural language, an appropriate expression to feeling. Now most men, whose Common School education closed twenty or twenty-five years ago, will bear me out in saying, that the mechanical part of reading was the only branch of this accomplishment which, in the great majority of our schools, was then attended to. The intellectual part, which consists in seeing, with the mind's eye, the whole subject, broad, ample, unshadowed, just as the author saw it, was mainly neglected. Consider what a wonderful,—what an almost magical boon, a writer of great genius confers upon us,

when we read him intelligently. As he proceeds from point to point in his argument or narrative, we seem to be taken up by him, and carried from hill-top to hill-top, where, through an atmosphere of light, we survey a glorious region of thought, looking freely, far and wide, above and below, and gazing in admiration upon all the beauty and grandeur of the scene. But if we read the same author, unintelligently, not one of the splendors he would reveal to us, is pictured upon the eye. All is blank. The black and white pages of the book are, to our vision, the outside of the universe in that direction. I never attended any but a Common School until I was sixteen years of age, and up to that time, I had never heard a question asked, either by teacher or scholar, respecting the meaning of a word or sentence in a reading lesson. In spelling, when words were addressed singly to the eye or ear, we uttered a single mechanical sound; and in reading, when the words came in a row, the sounds followed in a row; but it was the work of the organs of speech only,—the reflecting and imaginative powers being all the while as stagnant as the Dead Sea. It was the noise of machinery thrown out of gear; and, of course, performing no work, though it should run on forever. The exercises had no more significancy than the chattering of magpies or the cawing of ravens; for it was no part of the school instruction of those days to illustrate and exemplify the power and copiousness of the English language, and, out of its flexible and bright-colored words, to make wings, on which the mind could go abroad through height and depth and distance, exploring and circumnavigating worlds.

Nor was our instruction any better in regard to the rhetorical part of reading, which consists in such a compass of voice and inflection of tone,

as tend to reproduce the feelings of the speaker in the minds of the hearers. There is this difference between the intellectual and the rhetorical part of reading;—the intellectual refers to our own ability to perceive and understand ideas, arguments, conclusions;—the rhetorical refers to the power of exciting in others, by our own enunciation and manner of delivery, the sentiments and emotions which we feel, or which were felt by the author in whose place we stand.

Some men have possessed this power, and some men now possess it, in such perfection, that when they rise to address a concourse of people,—the more numerous the concourse, the better for their purpose,—they forthwith migrate, as it were, into the bodies of the whole multitude before them; they dwell, like a spirit, within the spirits of their hearers, controlling every emotion and resolve, conjuring up before their eyes whatever visions they please, making all imaginations seem substance and reality,—rousing, inflaming, subduing, so that, if they cry War! every hearer becomes valiant and hot as Mars; but if they cry Peace! the fiercest grow gentle and merciful as a loving child. This is a great art; and when the orator is wise and good, and the audience intelligent, there is no danger, but a delicious illusion and luxury in its enjoyment. Who has not gone beyond the delight, and speculated upon the phenomenon itself, when he has seen a master of the art of music place himself before a musical instrument, and, soon as with nimble fingers he touches the strings, which, but a moment before, lay voiceless and dead, they pour out living and ecstatic harmonies,—as though some celestial spirit had fallen asleep amid the chords, but, suddenly awakening, was celebrating its return to life, by a song of its native elysium. When such music ceases, it seems hardly a figure of

speech to say, "the angel has flown." But what is this, compared with that more potent and exquisite instrument, the well-trained voice? When Demosthenes or Patrick Henry pealed such a war-cry, that all people, wherever its echoes rang, sprung to their arms, and every peaceful citizen, as he listened, felt the warrior growing big within him, and taking command of all his faculties, what instrument or medium was there, by which the soul of the orator was transfused into the souls of his hearers, but the voice? Yet while their bodies stood around, as silent and moveless as marble statuary, there raged within their bosoms a turbulence and whirlwind and boiling, fiercer than if ocean and Ætna had embraced. And so, to a great extent, it is even now, when what they uttered is fittingly read. We call this magic, enchantment, sorcery, and so forth; but there is no more magic in it, than in balancing an egg on the smaller end,—each being equally easy when we have learned how to do it.

None, however, of the beauties of rhetorical reading can be attained, unless the intellectual part is mastered. The mechanical reader is a mere grinder of words. If he reads without any attempt at expression, it is mere see-saw and mill-clackery; if he attempts expression, he is sure to mistake its place, and his flourishes become ridiculous rant and extravagance.

Now no one thing will contribute more to intelligent reading in our schools, than a well selected library; and, through intelligence, the library will also contribute to rhetorical ease, grace, and expressiveness. Wake up a child to a consciousness of power and beauty, and you might as easily confine Hercules to a distaff, or bind Apollo to a tread-mill, as to confine his spirit within the mechanical round of a schoolroom,

where such mechanism still exists. Let a child read and understand such stories as the friendship of Damon and Pythias, the integrity of Aristides, the fidelity of Regulus, the purity of Washington, the invincible perseverance of Franklin, and he will think differently and act differently all the days of his remaining life. Let boys or girls of sixteen years of age, read an intelligible and popular treatise on astronomy and geology, and from that day, new heavens will bend over their head, and a new earth will spread out beneath their feet. A mind accustomed to go rejoicing over the splendid regions of the material universe, or to luxuriate in the richer worlds of thought, can never afterwards read like a wooden machine,—a thing of cranks and pipes,—to say nothing of the pleasures and the utility it will realize.

Indeed, when a scholar, at the age of sixteen or eighteen years, leaves any one of our Public Schools, I cannot see with what propriety we can say he has learned the art of reading, in that school, if he cannot promptly understand, either by reading himself, or by hearing another read, any common English book of history, biography, morals, or poetry; or if he cannot readily comprehend all the words commonly spoken, in the lecture-room, the court-room, or the pulpit. It is not enough to understand the customary words used at meal-time, or in a dram-shop, or in congressional brawling. I know it is the cry of many a hearer to the speaker,—"Come *down* to my comprehension;" but I cannot see why any speaker, who speaks good English words,—whether derived originally from the Saxon or the Latin, or any other lawful source,—has not quite as good a right to say to the hearer, "Come *up* to my language." When a clergyman, or public speaker of any kind, for every hour that he

spends in *thinking* out his discourse, must spend two hours in diluting it with watery expressions, in order to have it run so thin that every body may see to the bottom, he loses not only the greater part of his time, but he loses immensely in the value and impressiveness of his teachings. If, in the heat of composition, and with the light of all his faculties brought to a focus, he kindles with a thought which glows like the orient sun, must he stop and cut it up into farthing candles, lest the weak eyes of some bat or mole should be dazzled by its brightness? But, in all such cases, the hearers lose still more than the speaker. By the half-hour or hour together, they must receive small coins,—cents and four-penny bits,—instead of guineas and doubloons. They are like those ignorant, foreign depositors in one of our city Savings Banks, during a late panic in the money market, who rushed to the counter, demanding immediate payment; but when pieces of gold were offered to them, of whose value they had no test, and with whose image and superscription they were not acquainted, they besought the officers, although, as they supposed, at the imminent risk of losing their whole deposit, to pay them in small change, where they felt at home. Just so it is with those who are forever calling upon the speaker to come down to their comprehension, in regard to his language and style; for, if he obeys the call and goes very far down, in order to meet them, he necessarily leaves much of the grandeur and beauty and sublimity of his subject behind him. When a speaker is to discourse upon any great theme,—one belonging to any department of a universe which Omniscience has planned and Omnipotence has builded, ought he not to be allowed a generous liberty in the use of language? Ought he not to be allowed a scope and amplitude of expression, by which he can display, as on a

sky-broad panorama, the infinite relations that belong to the minutest thing; or, on the other hand, should he not be allowed that condensation of speech, by which the vastest systems of nature can be consolidated into a single word, to be hurled, like a bolt, at its mark? Is it not as absurd to restrict the speaker, on such occasions, to mere nursery or cradle-talk, as it would be to deny sea-room to an admiral, and require him, for our amusement, to manœuvre navies in a mill-pond?

Suppose a company of Americans should go to France or Germany, and after picking up a few words in hotels and diligences, should attend the public lecture, the play, or the services of the cathedral, and should there demand of the speakers to keep within the narrow limits of their vocabulary,—I ask, whether it would not be most unreasonable, on the one side, to make such a demand, and impossible on the other, to comply with it? And how would the case be altered, though the company should reside there for twenty-one years, if they still remained ignorant of the language of the country? Now this is just our case. Children, of course, come into the world with just as little knowledge of English as of French and German; and if they remain here for twenty-one years, without learning English words, how can they expect to understand English speakers?

I do not mean, by these remarks, to countenance or palliate the folly of those speakers or writers, who are always straining after new words, or swelling forms of expression; and whose breadth and flow of style do not resemble a river, but only a tiny stream whipped into bubbles. It is occasionally our lot to encounter men who seem to have imbibed some mathematical notion, that the power of a word is as the square

of its length, and hence they suppose, that what Horace calls seven-foot words* must have at least forty-nine times the pith of monosyllables. Such diction and style are as offensive to men of good taste, as they are unintelligible to the illiterate. But I do mean, by these remarks, to give a definition of what should be understood by the phrase,—*learning to read.* Unless pupils, therefore, on going out from our schools, can read intelligently any good English book, and understand any speech or discourse expressed in good English words, they cannot, with any propriety, be said to have learned to read. And as no set of reading books, in our schools, contains any thing like the whole circle of words which are in common and reputable use, in the pulpit, at the bar, in the senate, or in works of standard literature, it is obvious that a school library is needed to supply the great deficiency, which otherwise would necessarily exist in the language of the present children; and, of course, in the language of the future men and women.

Justice, in reference to this subject, has never been done to the clerical profession. They habitually address audiences, the most promiscuous in point of attainment,—and, so far as it regards the various qualities of language,—its scope, its majesty, its beauty, its melody, its simplicity,—if they prepare an entertainment of milk for intellectual babes, the full-grown men die of thin blood and inanition;—if, on the other hand, they bring forward strong meat for men, it cannot be assimilated by the weak organs of the sucklings. Hence multitudes abandon the sanctuary altogether; and the ignorant, who need its teachings most, are most likely to desert it. How important then, it is, for all the divine purposes of this profession, to teach children the art of reading, in

* Sesquipedalia verba.

the true, legitimate and full sense of that phrase; and, for this end, a good school library is indispensable.

I proceed to notice another grand distinction between a Common School with a library, and a Common School without one; and a still more important distinction, between a State, all of whose Common Schools have libraries, and a State in which there are none. This distinction consists in the power of libraries to enlarge the amount of useful knowledge possessed by a community. The State which teaches one new truth to one of its citizens does something; but how much more, when by teaching that truth to all, it multiplies its utilities and its pleasures by the number of all the citizens. The saying of Adam Smith has been quoted thousands of times, that he who makes two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, is a public benefactor. But he who doubles the amount of knowledge belonging to a community, is a public benefactor as much greater than he who doubles the blades of grass on its soil, as immortal, life-giving truth is better than the perishing flowers of the field. Could we examine all the nations which are called civilized or Christian, we should not find one individual in a thousand worthy to be called *intelligent*, in regard to many kinds of knowledge, which might be possessed, and, for their own safety and happiness, should be possessed by all. We should not find one individual in a thousand who knows any thing instructive or pleasurable, respecting the wonderful structure of his own body, and the still more wonderful constitution and functions of his own mind; and respecting the laws,—the certain and infallible laws,—of bodily health and mental growth. There is not one individual in a thousand who has any knowledge, so definite as to be beneficial, of the history of our race; or

who knows any thing of the sublimer parts of astronomy, or of the magnificent and romantic science of geology,—a science which leads the mind backwards into time as far as astronomy leads it outwards into space;—or of chemistry with its applications to the arts of life; or of the principal laws of natural and mechanical philosophy; or of the origin, history, and processes of those useful arts, by which the common and every-day comforts of life are prepared. Now respecting most, if not all these subjects, every man and woman might possess a liberal fund of information, which would be to them an ever-springing fountain of delight and usefulness. But the uniform policy of governments has been to create a few men of great learning rather than to diffuse knowledge among the many. Literary institutions have been founded, and a nation's treasury almost emptied for their endowment; and when a rare and mighty genius has appeared in any part of the kingdom, he has been summoned to embellish and dignify the court or university; and rarely have such men ever sent back a ray to illumine the dark places of their nativity. The policy of governments has absorbed all light into the centre, instead of radiating it to the circumference. And when, by the combined labor of learned and studious men,—amid mountains of books, amid museums and apparatus and all the appliances of human art,—some new law of nature has been detected, another planet discovered in the heavens, or another curiosity upon the earth,—the rulers of mankind, the depositaries and trustees of a people's welfare, have celebrated the event with jubilee and *Te Deum*, and written themselves down the Solomons of the race. Between England and France,—two kingdoms which now stand and have long stood in the van of science and art,—a strong national jealousy

exists as to the relative superiority of their great men. England boasts that it was her Newton whose mighty hand drew aside the veil from the face of the heavens, and revealed the stupendous movements of the solar system. France retorts, that it was left to her La Place to perfect the Newtonian discovery, and to make every part of the celestial mechanism as intelligible as a watch to a watchmaker. England displays her achievements in the natural sciences. France flaunts her trophies in the exact ones. England points to her useful arts; France to those which are born of an elegant imagination. Now all these inventions and discoveries, so far as they go, are well. I rejoice in the existence of learning, any where. I contemplate with delight those imperial structures, where, for centuries, a sincere, though often an unintelligent homage has been offered to the divinities of knowledge. I gaze with gladdened eye, through the long vista of those galleries, where the lore of all former times has been gathered. It charms and exalts me to look upon cabinets which are enriched with all the wonders of land and sea; and upon laboratories, where Nature comes and submits herself to our rude and awkward experiments, teaching us, as lovingly as a mother teaches her infant child, and striving to make us understand some of the words of her omnipotent language. I look upon all these with delight, for they are treasuries and storehouses for the instruction and exaltation of mankind. Above all, I hail with inexpressible joy, whatever discovery may be made in any department of the immense and infinitely-varied fields of Nature; for I know that all truth is of God and from God, and was sent out to us as a messenger and guide, to lead our faltering steps upwards to virtue and happiness.

But still I mourn. I mourn that this splendid

apparatus of means should be restricted to so narrow a circle in the diffusiveness of its blessings. I mourn that numbers so few should be admitted to dwell in the light, while multitudes so vast should remain in outer darkness. I mourn that governments and rulers should have been blind to their greatest glory,—the physical and mental well-being of the millions whose destiny has been placed in their hands. God has given to all mankind capacities for enjoying the delights and profiting by the utilities of knowledge. Why should so many pine and parch, in sight of fountains whose sweet waters are sufficiently copious to slake the thirst of all? The scientific or literary well-being of a community is to be estimated not so much by its possessing a few men of great knowledge, as by its having many men of competent knowledge; and especially is this so, if the many have been stinted in order to aggrandize the few. Was it any honor to Rome that Lucullus had *five thousand* changes of raiment in his wardrobe, while an equal number of her people went naked to furnish his superfluity? How does the farmer estimate the value of his timberlands?—surely not by here and there a stately tree, though its columnar shaft should shoot up to the clouds, while, all around, there is nothing but dwarfish and scraggy shrubs. One or a few noble trees are not enough, though they rise as high and spread as wide as the sycamore of the Mississippi, but he wants the whole area covered, as with a forest of banians. And thus should be the growth of these immortal and longing natures which God has given to all mankind. Each mind in the community should be cultivated, so that the intellectual surveyor of a people,—the mental statistician, or he who takes the valuation of a nation's spiritual resources,—should not merely count a few individuals, scattered here and there;

but should be obliged to multiply the mental stature of one by the number of all, in order to get his product. The mensuration of a people's knowledge should no longer consist in calculating the possessions of a few, but in obtaining the sum total, or solid contents, in the possession of all. And for this end, the dimensions of knowledge, so to speak, must be enlarged in each geometrical direction; it must not only be extended on the surface, but deepened, until the whole superficies is cubed.

I say I rejoice that, in former times, facilities and incitements for the acquisition of knowledge have been enjoyed even by a few; but if this is to be all, and mankind are to stop where they now are; if, while light gladdens a few eyes, tens of thousands are still to grope on amid the horrors of mental blindness; if, while a few dwell serenely in the upper regions of day, the masses of mankind are to be plunged in Egyptian night, haunted by all the spectres of superstition, and bowing down to the foul idols of appetite and sense;—if such were the prospective destiny of the race, I would pray Heaven for another universal deluge,—

"To make one sop of all this solid globe,"—

to sweep all existing institutions away, and give a clear space for trying the experiment of humanity anew. The atrocities and abominations of men have proceeded from their ignorance as much as from their depravity; and rather than that war should continue to devour its nations; that slavery should always curse, as it now does, both enslaved and enslaver; that fraud and perfidy between man and man should abound, as they now abound, and that intemperance should rekindle its dying fires;—rather than all this, I would rejoice to see this solid globe hurled off into illimitable space, and made a tenantless

wanderer of the "vast inane." Now, who does not see that to gem the whole surface of the State with good schools, and to supply each school with a good library, will be the most effective means ever yet devised by human wisdom, for spreading light among the masses of mankind?

There is another respect in which the establishment of a library in every school district will add a new and grand feature to our Common School system. The whole object in the foundation and maintenance of our schools, hitherto, has been the education of children,—of minors. Ordinarily, and with very few exceptions, when our children have reached the age of sixteen, eighteen, or at furthest, of twenty-one years, they have been weaned from the schoolhouse; and, in a vast proportion of cases, so thoroughly weaned, too, that the very idea of the milk of this mother has been bitterness to their palates ever afterwards. How many, or rather, how few adults ever revisit the schoolhouse, as the spot of early and endearing associations! How few have been drawn to it by the tie of tender and delightful recollections, as a far wanderer is drawn homeward to visit, with tearful eyes, the almost holy spot where his infancy was cradled, where he slept upon his mother's breast, and listened to the councils of his father! No! Vast numbers of our children, when they have served out their regular term in the old, cheerless schoolroom, and are leaving it for the last time, have shaken the dust from off their feet, as a testimony against it. Were the schoolroom an attractive place, why should it be considered as so extraordinary an exploit in a teacher, to get the fathers and mothers of the district to visit their own children in it? Even the school committee,—those whose official duty it was to visit, and watch over the schools,—did not, until recently, make one-fourth part of the

visitations required by law. With very few exceptions, too, it was ascertained by the committees, that, although the law had prescribed the number of visitations which they should make, yet it had not prescribed their length; and the consequence was, that the longitude of their visits was inversely as the latitude of their construction.

But by a good school library, the faculty of the school will be enlarged. It will be made to extend its enlightening influences to the old as well as to the young; because every inhabitant of the district, under such conditions as may be deemed advisable, should be allowed to participate in the benefits of the library. Hence the schoolhouse will be not only a nursery for children, but a place of intelligent resort for men. The school will no longer be an institution for diffusing the mere rudiments or instrumentalities of knowledge, but for the bountiful diffusion of knowledge itself. The man will keep up his relation with the school, after he ceases to attend it as a scholar. Though he has mastered all the text books in the schoolroom, yet he will not have outgrown the school, until he has mastered all the books in the library.

And here I would dispel an apprehension, sometimes felt, that children, although supplied with suitable books, will contract no fondness for them. Since submitting the plan to the Board of Education, for the establishment of school libraries, I have sent out not less than a thousand letters soliciting information respecting the existence, magnitude and quality of public libraries of all kinds; and I have also availed myself of all opportunities furnished by personal intercourse, to ascertain the habits and means of our people, in regard to reading. After all these opportunities for information, I am able to say, that I have never heard of a single instance where a well selected library for children has run down

or run out, through abandonment or indifference on their part. I have heard of many instances where grown people, during some transient spasm of literature or vanity, have collected a library for themselves, whose books, after a short time, were read, as bills are so often read in our legislative bodies,—by their titles only; and, at last, the office of librarian has been merged in that of auctioneer. But I have never known one such case in regard to children's libraries.

But suppose an unfortunate case of neglect or abuse of the library privileges should sometimes, or even frequently occur, would it furnish a valid argument against the measure? Does the gardener refuse to plant his garden, or the husbandman his fields, because every seed that he casts into the earth does not spring up and yield its thirty, its sixty, or its hundred fold? Nay; if, through accident or misfortune, the whole expected growth fails, does he not, with undiminished faith and alacrity, commit new seed to the soil, confiding in the veracity of the Promiser and the fulfilment of the promise, that, if ye sow bountifully, ye shall reap also bountifully.

There is another advantage of a good school library,—not so obvious, perhaps, as those already mentioned,—but one which I deem of no small importance. A library will produce one effect upon school children, and upon the neighborhood generally, before they have read one of the books, and even if they should never read one of them. It is in this way:—The most ignorant are the most conceited. Unless a man knows that there is something more to be known, his inference is, of course, that he knows every thing. Such a man always usurps the throne of universal knowledge, and assumes the right of deciding all possible questions. We all know that a conceited dunce will decide questions extemporaneously.

which would puzzle a college of philosophers, or a bench of judges. Ignorant and shallow-minded men do not see far enough to see the difficulty. But let a man know that there are things to be known, of which he is ignorant, and it is so much carved out of his domain of universal knowledge. And for all purposes of individual character, as well as of social usefulness, it is quite as important for a man to know the extent of his own ignorance as it is to know any thing else. To know how much there is that we do not know, is one of the most valuable parts of our attainments; for such knowledge becomes both a lesson of humility and a stimulus to exertion. Let it be laid down as a universal direction to teachers, when students are becoming proud of their knowledge, to spread open before them some pages of the tremendous volume of their ignorance.

Now those children who are reared without any advantages of intelligent company, or of travel, or of books,—which are both company and travel,—naturally fall into the error of supposing that they live in the centre of the world, that all society is like their society, or, if different from theirs, that it must be wrong; and they come, at length, to regard any part of this vast system of the works of man, and of the wisdom of God, which conflicts with their home-bred notions, as baneful, or contemptible, or non-existent. They have caught no glimpse of the various and sublime sciences which have been discovered by human talent and assiduity; nor of those infinitely wise and beautiful laws and properties of the visible creation, in which the Godhead has materialized his goodness and his power, in order to make them perceptible to our senses;—and hence they naturally infer that they know all knowable things, and have "learnt out";—that they have exhausted the fulness of Deity, and into their nutshell capacities

have drained dry the fountains of Omniscience. Now, when this class of persons go out into the world and mingle with their fellow-men, they are found to be alike useless, on account of their ignorance, and odious for their presumption. And if a new idea can be projected with sufficient force to break through the incrustations of folly and prejudice which envelop their soul, and with sufficient accuracy of aim to hit so small a globule, they appear as ridiculous, under its influence, as did the mouse, which was born in the till of a chest, and, happening one day to rear itself upon its hind-legs and to look over into the body of the chest, exclaimed, in amazement, that he did not think the universe so large! A library, even before it is read, will teach people that there is something more to be known.

An incidental advantage will often accrue from this library enterprise, which I cannot pass by in silence. Suppose the most intelligent and respectable portion of the State to be deeply convinced of the expediency of a school library, and, therefore, to send up an earnest appeal to the Legislature, for some assistance or bounty to enable the districts to procure one. Suppose that the Legislature should offer to contribute a certain sum, on condition that the districts would raise an equal sum, for the purpose. Doubtless, on the part of a large number of districts, there would be great alacrity in complying with the conditions prescribed. But still, the number of districts and even of towns will not be inconsiderable, where Ignorance and Mammon bear such sway, that the majority of voters will refuse to grant even this pittance for the welfare of their children. It is in this class of cases that the incidental advantages to which I refer, will be realized. In most of such districts or towns, there will be some individual or individuals,—of narrow means, but of a

boundless soul,—who will at once give the requisite sum, and thus secure the object. Now these occasional or special opportunities to do a good deed, are of inestimable value. They stir up the generous emotions of our nature from a depth, where they might otherwise have lain stagnant forever. They awaken within us a delightful surprise at our own capabilities of usefulness and happiness. Our sordid habit is, to call every unexpected occurrence of good fortune happening to ourselves, *a god-send;* but there is no such god-send as the divine prompting to do good to others. Let an unforeseen occasion of beneficence be presented to a benevolent man, and let the merits of the case be made visible to him by their own beautiful light;—a resolve to act, at once flashes upon his mind, and the generous deed is done;—not done from ostentation, or the love of praise, or from any low or sordid aim; but done because it is right and lovely and in harmony with his better nature; and lo! in the bosom of that man the fountains of immortal joy burst open, and such peace and gladness and exaltation pervade and dilate his soul, that he would not barter one moment of their fruition for an eternity of selfish pleasures. When a majority of the district belong to the firm of Hunks, Shirk & Co., then Mr. Goodman must supply the library, and the next generation will rise up and bless him.

The effects of a habit of reading, in furnishing home and fireside attractions for children, and thus keeping them from vicious companions, and from places of vicious resort, are so obvious, that I shall not here dwell upon them; but content myself with referring to one more of the unenumerated and innumerable advantages of a well chosen library for our schools;—I mean the efficacy of good books in expelling bad ones. A true friend of our country and our race is not satisfied

with knowing that we are a reading people;—he asks impatiently, what it is that we read. That there is an alarming amount of vain and pernicious reading in our community, no observing person will deny. For unchastened imaginations and perverted morals, there is a fascination in accounts of battles, shipwrecks, murders and piracies; and many people gloat over those demoralizing police reports in the newspapers, in which the foul scenes of darkness and depravity are brought to light, and made themes for jest and merriment. But have we taught children to read, for the sake of enlarging their acquaintance with impurity and immorality? Fiction, too, from the plump novel of two volumes to the lean newspaper story of two columns, together with the contents of light and fanciful periodicals, constitutes the staple reading of a vast number of our people. Now I believe it to be no exaggeration to say, that ninety-nine parts in every hundred of all the novels and romances extant, are as false to truth and nature, to all verisimilitude to history and to the affairs of men, as though they had been written, not by lunarians, but by lunatics themselves. I mean, that, if we, as men and women, were to act as novel-writers make their men and women act, the results upon our fortunes and lives would bear no resemblance to the fortunes and lives of the fictitious personages they describe. The novelist makes godlike heroes and benefactors of the race, of those who never studied and toiled and sacrificed for the welfare of mankind; and, just so far as he does this, he is contradicted by the testimony of universal history and experience. His works are often bloated with a maudlin sentiment, wholly unkindred and alien to that healthy humanity, which, by the combined action of intellect and benevolence, not only perceives, but fulfils the law of love. Often, too, he

robes impurity in the garments of light, and thus sets at defiance all the laws of the moral universe; or, he deems it poetic justice to reward the holy sacrifices of virtue by the base coin of worldly honors or wealth. The mind, when fed on mere fantasies and etherialities, has no vigor for the stern duties of life; it is borne away by every illusion, like a bulrush upon the tide.

The prevalence of novel-reading creates a host of novel-writers; and the readers and writers, by action and reaction, increase the numbers of each other. Hence great capacities for usefulness are lost to the world, and the most important of human duties remain unperformed. For many of the sons and daughters of Adam, this is a world of perplexity and suffering and inexpressible anguish; it is a world where innocent nerves are laid bare to all the aggressions of want and disease, and where men sink into pitfalls of ruin, which the light of a little knowledge would have revealed, and from which kindly counsels would have saved them. What is worst of all,—it is a world where guiltless children are led, as by the hand, into dangers and temptations; or rather, they are propelled into dangers and temptations, by forces of which they are unconscious, and over which they have no control; and in these perils they struggle for a moment, and then sink into horrible depths of crime and wretchedness, which, by an unholy influence, harden our hearts against them as much as they harden their hearts against virtue. Society is spotted all over with moral leprosy; and hot tears, more bitter than the waters of Marah, are furrowing innocent cheeks; and while this actual sin and suffering abound, we cannot spare the finest geniuses of the race to spend their lives in creating Worlds of Shadows; nor can we allow the most educated of our people to escape from the great work of solacing and redeeming mankind, to

revel in the brilliant but bodiless realms of fancy. Every hand and every hour should be devoted to rescue the world from its insanity of guilt, and to assuage the pangs of human hearts with balm and anodyne. To pity distress is but human; to relieve it is godlike. But I have never found that those who weep most freely over fictitious pain, have keener susceptibilities than others for real woe. What an absolute inversion of the whole moral nature does it suppose, to find delight in tracing the fortunes of imaginary beings, while living in the midst of such actual sufferings as ought to dissolve the soul into a healing balm for their relief, without recognizing their existence. It is said, indeed, that Dickens,—the last king whom the world of novel-readers have seated upon their precarious throne,—has attributes of humanity which distinguish him from his predecessors. It is said that he looks over and beyond the splendid circles of opulence and fashion, and selects his objects of interest and sympathy from among the hitherto outcast and forsaken of the world. But I must say again, that I have not seen any fresh outflowing of compassion, any swelling of the scanty rills of benevolence towards the poor, the ignorant, the helpless, the misguided, among the gay and affluent circles who vindicate their homage to this new sovereign, because he illumines his pages with the glow of a kindlier humanity. To those who,—while surrounded with luxuries and superfluities, and defended by golden guards against cold and hunger, and all the privations and temptations of poverty,—read, breathless and tearful, the story of "Little Nell," let me say, there is a "Little Nell" in the next street, or at the next door, of you all,—some hapless child, cast, desolate and forlorn, upon the bleak shores of Time, having no friend in the abandoned mother that bore her, and wandering,

through all the years of infancy and childhood, as in one perpetual and tempestuous night of fear and suffering; while the opulent and the educated, reclining on silken couches, in splendid saloons, expend a barren sympathy over woes that never were felt. Throughout our land, in city and in country, groups and companies of innocent children,—the offspring of intemperance or profligacy,—are tossed for an hour upon the weltering tide of life; but hearing no voice of sympathy, seeing no hand outstretched for their deliverance, they sink to rise no more.

> As when the young of land-birds, in the spring,
> Quit the warm nest, and spread the untaught wing,
> Some whirlwind blast, descending from the north,
> Wheels them on high, and drives them furious forth
> Far out to sea. Alas, the fated brood!
> The empty sky 's above; below, the yawning flood.
> Backward they turn to win their native vale,
> And strive, with desperate wing, to stem the gale.
> In vain! They fall, by fear and toil opprest,
> Till the rude wave assaults their throbbing breast.
> Once more! for life! they mount with piteous cry,
> Then, one by one, they fall, they shriek, they die!

Even thus, by tens and by hundreds, perish innocent children, at our own doors,—lost to all the delights of life, lost in the deeper perdition of the soul,—through lack of human sympathy in self-styled Christians. Such children are the victims of temptations and exposures, which, to all moral intents, they are as incapable of resisting, as is the half-fledged young of the land-bird, to defy the mingled might of ocean and storm. Is it as noble, is it as like the Divine Exemplar, to dote over imaginary creations of loveliness and purity, as to create and foster that loveliness and purity ourselves, in hearts otherwise perverted and lost? To describe possible happiness, or linger over its enchanting delineations, is it, or can it be, like rescuing children from the very throat of the whirlpool which is carrying them down

to destruction; is it like bestowing happiness, by our own efforts, upon our sorrowing fellow-mortals? Look, my friends, for one moment, around you, and see what things God accomplishes without our assistance; then look again, and see for the accomplishment of what things God honors us by demanding our aid. To combine insensate elements into a flower; to spread the rainbow across the dark folds of the retreating storm; to emblaze the deep recesses of the firmament with new constellations;—these works God has left to blind mechanical and organic laws. But to rear the amaranth of virtue for a celestial soil; to pale the diamond's glow by the intenser effulgence of genius; to pencil, as with living flame, a rainbow of holy promise and peace upon the blackness and despair of a guilty life; to fit the spirits of weak and erring mortals to shine forever, as stars, amid the Host of Heaven;—for these diviner and more glorious works, God asks our aid; and He points to the children who have been evoked into life, as the objects of our labor and care. One drop of baptismal water poured upon the infant's head, from the holy font of wisdom and love, will quench more of the fires of guilt, than an ocean of consecrated waters can afterwards extinguish. And is it not time for the self-styled disciples of Christ to repel the bitter irony of their name? Is it not time for them to imitate the Divine Master on whose name they call, and, like him, surrender the pleasures of luxury and sense, that they may go about doing good? Is it not time for them to seek out the children of wretchedness,—and so much the more as they are the more wretched,—and fold them in their arms, and bless them by instruction and example? The garden of an earthly paradise for mankind can never be entered but through the garden of Gethsemane. Yet where are they who

sweat drops of blood in their agony for the welfare of the race; where are they who spurn the honors and distinctions of an earthly ambition, and say, of the proffered empire of the world, that it is an offence; where are they, whose striving soul sleep does not visit at the coming on of night, whose head is pillowless, though surrounded by chambers of oriental magnificence, and who enter the path of duty, with unfaltering step, although in the vista's distant perspective there stands the fatal cross? If Peter were one of us, and should stand unconcerned in the midst of the rising generation, and put forth no helping hand to succor them, he would need no oath to seal his perfidy to his Master,—forsworn by apathy alone!

O! how forever beautiful and divine in the sight of man; how holy in the eye of Heaven; how gladdening in the retrospect of all coming ages; if, instead of surrendering their cultivated powers to the dreams and fantasies of romance, the daughters of opulence and leisure would awaken to the realities of the only true and worthy existence, and would seek an enduring happiness,—where they would be sure to find it, —in carrying knowledge and virtue and joy to the children of poverty and wretchedness. Let them lead these darkling wanderers to the joyful light of knowledge. Let them shake free the wings of immortal spirits, now so clogged with the mire of earth, that they cannot soar upward to heaven. Beneath the feet of such angel ministers, as they go on their errands of mercy and love, the very earth is hallowed; and the air is made fragrant and luminous by their tones and smiles of affection. Surely, no thanksgiving offered to God can be so grateful as deeds of charity done to suffering childhood.

But how, I ask, can that pernicious reading, which has done at least as much as any thing

else, to separate feeling from action, to sever the natural connection between benevolent impulses and benevolent deeds, to dissociate emotions of pity for distress from a desire to succor and relieve it,—how can the flood of this reading be stayed? I answer, that much can be done by the substitution of books and studies which expound human life and human duty, as God has made them to be. Neither by the force of public opinion, nor by any enactment of the Sovereign Legislature, can the noxious works which now infest the community be gathered into one Alexandrian pile, and by the application of one torch, the earth be purified from their contaminations. No! It must be done, if done at all,—in the expressive language of Dr. Chalmers,—"by the expulsive power of a new affection." A purer current of thought at the fountain can alone wash the channels clean. For this purpose, I know of no plan, as yet conceived by philanthropy, which promises to be so comprehensive and efficacious, as the establishment of good libraries in all our school districts, open respectively to all the children in the State, and within half an hour's walk of any spot upon its surface.

NOTE. On the 3d day of March, 1842, the Legislature passed a Resolve offering a bounty of $15, to each school district in the State, which would appropriate $15,—both sums to be expended for the purchase of a school library. By subsequent Resolves, enlarging the provisions of the former, it is now provided that where a district contains more than twice sixty children, three times sixty, &c., it may draw as many times $15 from the State Treasury, as the number sixty is contained in the number of its children, on condition of raising an equal sum. Towns not districted may draw in the same proportion. A great majority of the districts in the State have already availed themselves of the privileges of these Resolves.

LECTURE VII.

ON SCHOOL PUNISHMENTS.

My subject is, *Punishment*, and, more especially, Corporal Punishment, in our schools. Important questions are agitated, respecting its rightfulness and expediency, under any circumstances; and, if rightful and expedient, at all, then respecting its mode, its extent, and the circumstances under which it should be inflicted. I despair of reconciling the conflicting opinions which are entertained on these topics; but may I not hope to elucidate some points, pertaining to them, and perhaps to lessen the distance between the extremes of doctrine now existing amongst us?

All punishment, considered by itself, is an evil. In other words, all pain, considered by itself, is an evil; and the immediate object of punishment is the infliction of pain. I think that no one who does not altogether deny the existence of evil, will deny that pain, abstracted from all antecedents and consequences, is evil; and, if any one denies that evil exists, I answer him in the language of Soame Jenyns, "let him have the toothache, or get into a law-suit." The ultimate object of punishment is to avert an evil greater than itself. We justify ourselves for inflicting it,—not because it is a pleasure to us to do so,—for that would be diabolical; nor wholly because the culprit deserves it; for if we could arrest him and

reform him, as well without the infliction of pain as with it, no benevolent man would prescribe the pain; and, amongst all civilized nations, when a malefactor, who has been condemned to death, becomes insane, he is respited until reason is restored; although it is clear that the loss of reason cannot expiate the past offence, and, therefore, that the *deserts* of the transgressor remain the same as before. We do not then inflict punishment wholly because it is deserved; but we inflict it that we may ward off a greater evil by a less one,—a permanent evil by a temporary one. We administer it, only as a physician sometimes administers poison to a sick man,—not because poison is congenial to the healthy system, nor, indeed, because poison is congenial to the diseased system; but because it promises to arrest a fatal malady until appropriate remedial measures can be taken. Would any person be upheld or approved, by a sane community, for inflicting the pain of punishment upon a child, when he could have produced the desired object as well without it? Punishment, then, taken *by itself*, is always to be considered as an evil. The practical deduction from this principle, is, that the evil of punishment should always be compared with the evil proposed to be removed by it; and, in those cases only, where the evil removed preponderates over the evil caused, is punishment to be tolerated. The opposite course would purchase exemption from a less evil, by voluntarily incurring a greater one.

These principles seem clear, and for their support I believe we have the concurrent opinion of all writers of any note, on jurisprudence or ethics, and of all sensible men. In following out these principles to their application, I fear I may fall into error; and I proceed, with unfeigned diffidence, to a further development of my views.

Should I differ from others, I only ask,—what I am most ready, on my own part, to give,—a candid reconsideration of the points of disagreement.

Let me premise, that there are two or three peculiar difficulties attending the discussion of this subject. If the truth lies, as I believe it does, in the mean and not in either of the extremes, then those ultraists who believe in the doctrine either of no-punishment, or of all-punishment, will be prone to seize upon arguments or concessions, on their own side, to reject those on the other side, and thus confirm themselves in their respective ultraisms; and perhaps, at the same time, bring forward a charge of inconsistency. Probably there is no subject, which it is more difficult for a speaker to balance well in his own mind, and to leave well-balanced in the minds of his hearers.

Again; it is undoubtedly true that most men have formed their opinions on the subject of punishment, more from feeling and less from reflection, than perhaps on any other subject whatever. In conversing upon this topic, I have almost uniformly observed, that my collocutor has advanced positive, decided general opinions, and then adverted to some particular fact, in his own experience or observation, on which the general opinions had been founded. But sound opinions are usually the result of an extended survey of facts. Here, however, the intensity with which a single fact has been felt is a substitute for numbers. The judgment of many a man has been decided,—if not enlightened,—respecting the whole subject of punishment, by one vivid impression made, while a schoolboy, on his back or hand. Two boys fight. One of them gets seriously injured. The schoolmaster punishes the victor. The vanquished boy and his parents approve the avenging dispensation, and become strenuous advocates for high-toned discipline. The victorious,

but punished boy, with his parents, question the policy, perhaps deny altogether the right of chastisement. And thus, the same fact gives rise to opposite opinions, according to the relation sustained towards it by the parties.

Probably on no other subject, pertaining to Education, is there so marked a diversity or rather hostility of opinion, as on this; nor on any other, such perseverance, not to say obstinacy, in adhering to opinions once formed. Where feeling predominates, there is a strong tendency to ultraism; and questions respecting punishment are more often decided by sensation than by reflection. Hence the extremes to which opinions run, and the positiveness and dogmatism with which they are advocated by the partisans of each side. In the public station which it is my lot to fill, I have been present at many discussions on this subject, and have held conversation and correspondence respecting it with a great number of individuals, in all parts of the Commonwealth; and I find one party strenuously maintaining, that improvement in our schools can advance only so far and so fast as bodily chastisement recedes, while the other party regard a teacher or a parent, divested of his instruments of pain, as a discrowned monarch. It is no exaggeration to say, judging from their tone of earnestness and confidence, that there are men who would destroy all trees and shrubbery in order to abolish the means of flagellation, while others seem devoutly to believe that a good supply of the materials for whipping is the final cause for trees' growing; and they would always locate a schoolhouse in convenient vicinity to a hickory or birchen grove,—not for the shade, but for the substance.

The first point which I shall consider, is, whether *corporal* punishment is ever necessary in our schools. As preliminary to a decision of this

question, let us take a brief survey of facts. We have, in this Commonwealth, about one hundred and eighty thousand* children between the ages of four and sixteen years. All these children are not only legally entitled to attend our public schools, but it is our great desire to increase that attendance, and he who increases it is regarded as a reformer. All that portion of these children who attend school, enter it from that vast variety of homes which exist in the State. From different households, where the widest diversity of parental and domestic influences prevails, the children enter the schoolroom, where there must be comparative uniformity. At home, some of these children have been indulged in every wish, flattered and smiled upon, for the energy of their low propensities, and even their freaks and whims enacted into household laws. Some have been so rigorously debarred from every innocent amusement and indulgence, that they have opened for themselves a way to gratification, through artifice and treachery and falsehood. Others, from vicious parental example, and the corrupting influences of vile associates, have been trained to bad habits and contaminated with vicious principles, ever since they were born;—some being taught that honor consists in whipping a boy larger than themselves; others that the chief end of man is to own a box that cannot be opened, and to get money enough to fill it; and others again have been taught, upon their father's knees, to shape their young lips to the utterance of oaths and blasphemy. Now, all these dispositions, which do not conflict with right more than they do with each other, as soon as they cross the threshold of the schoolroom, from the different worlds, as it were, of homes, must be made to obey the same

* Now, (1845,) above 192,000.

general regulations, to pursue the same studies, and to aim at the same results. In addition to these artificial varieties, there are the natural differences of temperament and disposition.

Again; there are about three thousand public schools in the State, in which are employed, in the course of the year, about five thousand different persons, as teachers, including both males and females. Excepting a very few cases, these five thousand persons have had no special preparation or training for their employment, and many of them are young and without experience. These five thousand teachers, then, so many of whom are unprepared, are to be placed in authority over the one hundred and eighty thousand children, so many of whom have been perverted. Without passing through any transition state, for improvement, these parties meet each other in the schoolroom, where mutiny and insubordination and disobedience are to be repressed, order maintained, knowledge acquired. He, therefore, who denies the necessity of resorting to punishment, in our schools,—and to corporal punishment, too, —virtually affirms two things:—first, that this great number of children, scooped up from all places, taken at all ages and in all conditions, can be deterred from the wrong and attracted to the right, without punishment; and secondly, he asserts that the five thousand persons whom the towns and districts employ to keep their respective schools, are now, and in the present condition of things, able to accomplish so glorious a work. Neither of these propositions am I, at present, prepared to admit. If there are extraordinary individuals,—and we know there are such,—so singularly gifted with talent and resources, and with the divine quality of love, that they can win the affection, and, by controlling the heart, can control the conduct of children, who, for years, have

been addicted to lie, to cheat, to swear, to steal, to fight, still I do not believe there are now five thousand such individuals in the State, whose heavenly services can be obtained for this transforming work. And it is useless, or worse than useless, to say, that such or such a thing can be done, and done immediately, without pointing out the agents by whom it can be done. One who affirms that a thing can be done, without any reference to the persons who can do it, must be thinking of miracles. If the position were, that children may be so educated from their birth, and teachers may be so trained for their calling, as to supersede the necessity of corporal punishment, except in cases decidedly monstrous, then I should have no doubt of its truth; but such a position must have reference to some future period, which we should strive to hasten, but ought not to anticipate.

Coinciding, then, with those who assert the necessity of occasional punishment, and even of occasional corporal punishment, in our schools, it seems to me that the more strenuous of its advocates are disposed to give too latitudinarian a construction to one argument in its favor. They quote and apply, as though there were no qualification or limit to their applicability, such passages as these from the Proverbs of Solomon:— "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son, but he that loveth him chastiseth him betimes." "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." "Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die." "Thou shalt beat him with a rod and shalt deliver his soul from hell." "The rod and reproof give wisdom," &c., &c. Now if these passages, and such as these, are applicable, in their unqualified and literal sense, to our times, then, indeed, we

must admit that the rod is the emblem of all the Christian graces. But, by the Mosaic law, he that smote his father or his mother, was to be put to death; and why is there not as much reason to suppose that the latter of these commands remains unabrogated and unqualified, as well as the former; and, therefore, that the true remedy for those who now make forcible resistance to parental control, is, not the House of Reformation for juvenile offenders, but the gallows? But can any one suppose that the passages above cited, and others of a kindred nature, were to be taken without any qualification, even in the age in which they were written? Can any one suppose that they were designed for all children alike, and to be exclusive of all other practicable means to deter from wrong doing? And yet, there is no express limitation. If alike applicable to all children, at that time, and if they remain unmodified, then, they are applicable to all children, and alike, at the present time. But again, I say, can any one suppose that the domestic discipline of a people, like the stiff-necked Jews, so accustomed to spectacles and histories of blood and carnage; by whose code so many offences were capital; who massacred men, women and children,—whole cities at a time,—and sawed asunder their prisoners, and tore them to pieces under harrows of iron;—can any one suppose that modes of parental discipline, in a land rife and red with such spectacles, are to be literally copied in a state of civilization so different as ours, without the most positive and unambiguous injunctions? One fact is worthy of remark in passing. If the doctrines of Solomon are to be taken literally, then he must have departed from them most egregiously, in regard to his own household; or those doctrines must have failed of their intended effect, for his son and his grandson proved to be two of the

most atrocious and heaven-contemning sinners, that ever sat upon the throne at Jerusalem.

There is one school, however, where I would give to these declarations of Solomon, the freest interpretation, applying them to all its pupils, and shivering rods by the bundle,—that is, the School for Scandal. There, let the motto be, "Lay on, Macduff."

But a conclusion in favor of the rightfulness or admissibility of punishment, in school, does nothing towards sanctioning an indefinite amount of it. Its rightfulness is limited by its object; and its only justifiable object is to restrain from the commission of offences, until remedial means can be brought to bear upon the offender. Beyond this limit, punishment becomes punishable itself. The object of punishment is, prevention from evil; it never can be made impulsive to good. Its office is to seize upon the contemner of laws, and stop him in his career of wrong, and hold him still, until by earnest expostulation, by kind advice, by affectionate persuasion, by a clear display of the nature of the offence committed, and the duty and the benefits of an opposite course, the offender can be led to inward repentance, and to resolutions of amendment. To produce such repentance and resolutions, is a work of time, of skill, of wisdom, of sympathy. It is a work which cannot be done in a minute, and it is because it cannot be done in a minute, that punishment becomes justifiable, as a means of preventing a continuance or repetition of the wrong, until a reformation can be effected in the culprit's mind. In all cases, therefore, the very fact of punishment supposes that a great deal else is to be done. By punishment, the offender is intercepted in the commission or the pursuit of wrong; but it is a wholly different task, and accomplished by wholly different means, to bring him back to

the right, and to make him see it and love it. Whoever, then, inflicts punishment, and stops there, omits the weightiest part of his duty; and such omission goes far to take away all justification for the punishment itself.

I have said that punishment, in itself, and abstracted from its hoped-for consequences, is always an evil. I wish to add a few considerations showing that it is a very great evil.

Punishment excites fear; it is, indeed, the primary object of punishment to excite fear; and fear is a most debasing, dementalizing passion. It may be proper to say, that I use the word *fear*, in this connection, as implying an intense activity of cautiousness, or apprehension for personal safety; and not as partaking at all of the idea of reverence or awe, in which sense it is sometimes used, in reference to the Supreme Being,—as when it is said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is the former species of fear only that is appealed to by the infliction of pain, and not one of the virtues ever grows under the influence of that kind of fear. Such fear may check the growth of vices, it is true; and this is the strongest remark that can be made in its defence; but it has, at the same time, a direct tendency to check the growth of every virtue, because fear of pain is not an atmosphere in which the virtues flourish; so that even the negative good which it produces, in deterring from wrong, is accompanied by the infliction of some positive harm. Let any person revert to his own experience, and then answer the question, whether he was as competent to think clearly, or to act wisely, when under the influence of fear, as when calm and self-possessed. Fear may make a man run faster, but it is always *from*, not *towards* the post of duty. Look at a man in an agony of fear; he is powerless, paralyzed, bereft of his senses, and almost

reduced to idiocy, so that, for the time being, he might as well be without limbs and without faculties as to have them. It is said that even the hair of the head will turn gray, in five minutes, under the boiling bleachery of a paroxysm of fear. There have been many cases where adults,—men whose minds had acquired some constancy and firmness,—have been made fools for life by sudden fright,—annulled at once, their brains turned into ashes by its consuming fires. And if such are the consequences of intense fear in grown men, what must be the effect upon the delicate texture of a child's brain, when, with weapon in hand, a brawny, whiskered madman flies at the object of his wrath, as a fierce kite pounces upon a timorous dove? Yet who of us that has reached middle age has not seen these atrocities committed against children, again and again?

Another consideration, showing punishment to be a very great evil, is, that the fear of bodily pain, which it proposes, makes the character pusillanimous and ignoble. Children should be trained to a disregard, and even a contempt of bodily pain, so that they may not be unnerved and unmanned at the very exigencies, when, in after-life, fortitude and intrepidity become indispensable to the performance of duty. Some foolishly-tender parents commit a great mistake when they fuss and flurry, and gather the whole household around, at every little rub or scratch received by a child; and bring out their apparatus of lint and liniment,—enough for the surgeon of a man-of-war, in a naval engagement. Sensitiveness to bodily pain should be discountenanced, because it impairs manliness and steadfastness of character. Children should be taught that corporal suffering, and imprisonment, and death itself, are nothing, compared with loyalty to truth and the godlike excellence of well doing, so that when they become

men they will be able to march, with unfaltering step, to the post of duty, though their path is enfiladed by a hundred batteries. But keeping the idea of bodily pain forever present to a child's mind counterworks this result. Indeed, a child who is whipped much will inevitably be driven into one or the other of two ruinous extremes. Which of the extremes it shall be, will depend upon the feebleness or the vigor of his natural disposition. If constitutionally of a timid and irresolute character, then frequent correction will excite his cautiousness to such a morbid activity that his cheek will blanch and his heart quail at the slightest menace of real dangers, or the imagination of unreal ones; and he will go through life trembling with causeless apprehensions, and incapable of recovering from one shudder of fear before he will be seized by another;—incapable of all manly resolution and heroism. If, on the other hand, the child has an energetic will, the very vehemence of which prompts to disobedience and waywardness, then frequency of chastisement will exasperate his nature, and make him recklessly bold and fool-hardy. It will make him despise the gentleness that belongs to a noble spirit, and mistake ferocity for courage. Now, what requital can any teacher make, which shall be an adequate compensation to a child for causing his dispositions to grow into a deformity which shall be a torment and a disgrace to him while life lasts? Have you never seen an aged tree whose trunk still bore the mark where some heedless man had struck his axe while it was yet young, and have you not observed that, on the wounded side of the tree, the foliage was sickly and the branches scraggy and misshapen, while a superabundance of nutriment sent up on the other side had made the limbs shoot out into huge disproportions? Such wounds are inflicted by un-

necessary punishment, upon the whole moral nature of a child.

But there is another consideration, of still more serious import. A teacher's duty is by no means restricted to the mere communication of knowledge. He is to superintend the growth of his pupils' minds. These minds consist of various powers and faculties, by which they are adapted to the various necessities, relations and duties of life. Some of them were given us for self-preservation. The object of these is, ourselves,—our own existence, our own sustenance, our own exemption from pain, and protection against danger and loss; —in fine, our personal well-being. Other powers are domestic and social in their nature,—such as the reciprocal love of parents and children; the celestial zone of affection that binds brothers and sisters into one; and our attachment to friends, which, under proper cultivation, enlarges into fraternal affection for the race. We also have moral and religious sentiments, which may be exalted into a solemn feeling of duty towards man and towards God. Now, it is a most responsible part of the teacher's duty to superintend the growth of these manifold powers, and to develop them symmetrically and harmoniously; to repress some, to cherish others, and to fashion the whole into beauty and loveliness as they grow. A child should be saved from being so selfish as to disregard the rights of others, or, on the other hand, from being a spendthrift of his own. He should be saved from being so proud as to disdain the world, or so vain as to go through the world beseeching every body to praise and flatter him. He should be guarded alike against being so devoted to his own family as to be deaf and dead to all social claims; and against being so quixotically social as to run to the ends of the earth, to bestow the bounty, for which his own family and neighborhood are suf-

fering. In fine, the teacher, as far as possible, is so to educate the child, that when he becomes a man, all his various faculties shall have a relative and proportionate activity and vigor, instead of his being nervously excitable on one side of his nature, and palsy-stricken on the other. This task is most difficult, and it requires that all the lights possible should shine upon the work. It is very easy to point out deformities of character, as they exhibit themselves glaringly and hideously in manhood; but it requires great perspicacity to detect the early tendencies to deformity, and the utmost delicacy and felicity of touch to correct them. If a full-grown tree is ugly or misshapen, any body can see it, but it is only the skilful cultivator who can foretell and forestall its irregular tendencies while it is yet young. It is this duty which makes the office of a teacher a sacred office. The teaching of A, B, C, and the multiplication table has no quality of sacredness in it; but if there is a sacred service, a holy ministry upon earth, it is that of setting a just bound to the animal appetites and sensual propensities of our nature, and quickening into life, and fostering into strength all benevolent and devout affections; for it is by the relative proportions between these parts of its nature, that the child becomes angel-like or fiend-like. Now, that the teacher may cherish what grows too slow, and check what grows too fast, it is indispensable that he should become acquainted with the inmost character and tendencies of his pupil. The pupil's whole mind and heart should be spread out, like a map, before the teacher for his inspection. The teacher should be able to examine this map, to survey it on all sides and at any time,—as you see a connoisseur walk round a beautiful statue or edifice, that he may commit all its proportions to memory. And here comes the evil I refer to. The moment a child's mind is

strongly affected by fear, it flies instinctively away and hides itself in the deepest recesses it can find, —often in the recesses of disingenuousness and perfidy and falsehood. Instead of exhibiting to you his whole consciousness, he conceals from you as much of it as he can; or he deceptively presents to you some counterfeit of it, instead of the genuine. No frighted water-fowl, whose plumage the bullet of the sportsman has just grazed, dives quicker beneath the surface, than a child's spirit darts from your eye when you have filled it with the sentiment of fear. And your communication with that child's heart is at an end;—on whatever side you approach him, he watches you and flies, and keeps an impassable distance between you and himself, until friendly relations are reëstablished between you. His body may be before you, but not his soul; or, if his soul ventures to peep from its hiding-place, it is only in some masquerade dress of deception, which he supposes may avert your anger. So long as this relation continues, whatever you do to him, you do in the dark. As he has ceased to show you what he is, you cannot know what he needs, and what will best befit his condition. When was there ever painter or sculptor so skilful, that he could paint or chisel without *seeing* the canvass or the marble on which he wrought? And when was ever a teacher so omniscient, that he could cultivate habits and character aright, unless he was admitted from day to day to see those thoughts and emotions of the child, whose long indulgence will result in the habits and character of the man?

A child should always be encouraged to make known all his doubts and difficulties, both of an intellectual and of a moral character; and, if won to you by confidence instead of being banished from you by fear, he will generally do so. If a learner does not state his doubt or difficulty, at

the time he feels it, the season will pass by, perhaps never to return. And certainly no other time can be so favorable for acquiring correct information, or for solving a doubt, as the time when the desire or the doubt arises in the mind. Yet, if a pupil fears even a rebuke or a frown, he will allow the proper occasions to pass by, at the hazard of remaining ignorant forever.

Are not these considerations sufficient to show that punishment,—I mean more particularly, corporal punishment,—and the fear which punishment proposes, constitute a great evil? Yet great as the evil is, I admit that it is less than the evil of insubordination or disobedience. It is better, therefore, to tolerate punishment, in cases where the teacher has no other resource, than to suffer insubordination or disobedience in our schools. Yet how infinitely better, to secure order and proficiency, by the power of conscience and the love of knowledge;—to supersede the necessity of violence by moral means. This is already done in a considerable number of schools; I trust it is done, with regard to some scholars, in every school;—that is, I trust there are at least some scholars, in every school in the Commonwealth, who never know the degradation of the lash. I trust there is no teacher, with such a *vacuum* of good qualities and such a *plenum* of bad ones, as to create the necessity for indiscriminate and universal flogging. What, then, ought teachers to do? I answer, they should aim to reach those higher and higher points of qualification, which shall enable them to dispense more and more with the necessity of punishment. If there is any teacher so low in the scale of fitness or competency as to feel obliged to punish every day, he should strive to prolong the interval to once a week. If any teacher punishes but once a quarter, he should strive to punish but once a year. If any one dis-

graces himself and human nature, by punishing fifty per cent. of his pupils, he should either leave the school, or make a most liberal discount from such an intolerable per centage. If any one punishes ten per cent. of his pupils, he should strive to reduce the number to five, to three, to one per cent.,—and then, if possible, to none at all. If there are five per cent. of our teachers who now keep school without punishment, this number should be increased, as fast as possible, to ten per cent., to thirty, to sixty, to ninety per cent.* That the necessity of punishment, so vehemently urged by some teachers,—and which is urged most vehemently by those who punish most,—is found, when analyzed, to be a necessity that arises from a want of competency, or fitness, in the teacher himself, rather than from any perversity or ungovernableness in the scholars, is demonstrable from this fact;—that certain teachers find it necessary to punish their pupils abundantly, but, on leaving the schools, and being succeeded by competent persons, the necessity of punishment vanishes,—the same schools being governed without it. Instances have occurred where a teacher who could not govern without punishment, has been followed, through successive schools, by one who could,—thus proving that the alleged necessity of punishment belonged to the teacher and not to the schools. Many a teacher has been turned out of school, because he could not govern without punishment, nor even with it; and has been succeeded, the next week, by one who found no occasion to use it,—thus affording demonstra-

* There are now, (1845,) at least ten to one of our teachers, as compared with the number in 1839, (when this lecture was written,) who keep school without corporal punishment. And in ninety-nine towns in every hundred, in the State, the flogging of girls, even where it exists at all, is an exceedingly rare event. Since 1837, the number of schools in the State, annually broken up through the incompetency of the teachers, or the insubordination of the scholars, has been reduced from between three and four hundred, to about fifty.

tive evidence, that the necessity of punishment, in those cases, was not in human nature, but only in the nature of Mr. A. B. Such is the result to be aimed at, longed for, toiled for, by all. In the mean time, I blame no teacher for occasional punishment, nor even for occasional corporal punishment. But what seems to me utterly unjustifiable, is, the defence of punishment, as though it were a good; or the palliation of it, as though it were not a great evil. What seems to me worthy of condemnation, is, a resort to punishment, because it may seem to be a more summary and convenient method of securing obedience and diligence than such a preparation for lessons on the part of the teacher, as would make them attractive to the pupil; and such exhibitions of kindness and interest, as would win the affection of a child, and make him a grateful coöperator, instead of a toiling slave. An hour spent daily, by the teacher, in the preparation of lessons, an anecdote, a narrative, an illustrative picture, would be a far more powerful awakener of dormant or sluggish minds, than the rod. A private interview with a neglectful or disorderly pupil, a visit to his family, some little attention or gratuity bestowed upon him,—any mode, in fine, evincing a genuine interest in his welfare,—would oftentimes accomplish what it is not in the power of blows to do. "By *mercy* and *truth*, iniquity is purged," says Solomon; "and by the fear of the Lord,"—not by the fear of man,—"men depart from evil."

As the profession of teaching rises in the estimation of the public, and as teachers improve in their capacities and disposition to fulfil the sacred duties of their office, may we not hope for a gradual change in our schools, in this respect, equally auspicious to them and to society? And may we not expect that those teachers who enjoy the most of social consideration and of emolument, will

take the lead in diffusing a higher spirit and in setting a nobler example?

Allow me here to say a word respecting a notion which I sometimes hear advocated, but which seems to me untenable. As an argument against corporal punishment, it is sometimes urged, that it makes the body a vicarious and involuntary sufferer for the offences of the mind. It is the mind, say these metaphysicians, which wills, which offends; and to punish the body for the offences of the mind, is as unjust as to punish John for the sins of Peter. But, if it is the mind which offends, in the guilty act, is it not also the mind which suffers, in the consequent penalty? Take away the mind,—that is, leave the body a corpse, and would its dead members then suffer? I confess, I cannot fathom the philosophy of this objection. There is, however, one way in which it can be answered, even on the principles which it assumes. If body and mind are to be considered as two, so as to exempt the former from suffering for the offences of the latter;—even then, though the mind may be the original offender, yet the body becomes a *particeps criminis*,—a partaker in the crime,—by consenting to carry the criminal purpose of the mind into execution; and it may therefore be lawfully punished *as an accessory after the fact.*

As to modes of punishment, not much needs be said, for the savageness of torture formerly practised in our schools, is now nearly discontinued, though it is still retained to a frightful extent in many families. When I was at the bar, I knew a father, who was a blacksmith by trade, and who used to punish his son by confining him in the cellar and carrying down heated nail-rods with which to punch and goad him. Before the boy was fifteen years old, he was tried for a capital offence. I was assigned by the court as his

counsel. He was convicted and sentenced to death, though the penalty was commuted to imprisonment, in the state-prison, for life. Such a fate was the natural result of such an education. If one or the other must have gone to the gallows, who can doubt that it should have been the father, and not the son? When an angry man chastises a child, it is not punishment; it is downright fighting, and so much the more criminal and disgraceful, as the person assailed is a child and not a man.

Blows should never be inflicted on the head. We observe, every day, how thin the skull of an infant is. We can see the pulse beat, on the top of its head. The cranium does not ordinarily become fixed in its shape, until the age of twenty-five years, —sometimes, not until a much later period of life. Dr. Griscom, in his excellent work, entitled "Animal Mechanism," says, "a vibration of the skull, by communicating a corresponding motion to the brain, is more dangerous ofttimes than an instrument forced through the bones and piercing the substance of the brain." And again; "Concussion of the brain is generally more productive of immediately serious results, than a puncture of its substance. It is well known, in fact, that a considerable portion of it, [the brain,] may be removed or destroyed, without proving fatal, or even injuring the mental faculties; but a sudden jar of its whole substance will almost certainly deprive the individual of all sense and consciousness, and, if not speedily recovered from, must terminate in death." This form of punishment, too, is as foolish as it is dangerous. To thwack a child over the head because he does not get his lesson, is about as wise as it would be to rap a watch with a hammer because it does not keep good time. No one, could he but see the delicate texture of the brain,—that organ where the Deity has brought the material and the immaterial, the

earthly and the immortal substances together, making each atom of the former so nice, so etherial, so divinely-fashioned, and suspending all, as it were, particle by particle, in the "Dome of Thought," so that they might leap, with lightning quickness, at the command of the all-pervading yet invisible soul;—no one, I say, who has ever seen this, if he be not a madman or a fool, will ever again strike a child upon the head. I have no doubt that the intellects of thousands of children have been impaired for life, by the blows which some angry parent or teacher has inflicted upon the head. Nature, foreseeing that the brain would be exposed to accidents, secured it, on all sides, by the hard bones of the cranium; and, to conceal any ruggedness in the solid masonry, she caused a silky vegetation to spring up from and adorn it. Had she foreseen how brutally it would be assaulted by men, would she not rather have encircled it with a spherical iron-fender, or made it bristle, all over, with porcupine's quills, to give it a defence instead of an ornament? Even in the British army and navy, where whipping has been, for frequency, like their daily bread, certain parts of the frame, such as the head and loins, have been held sacred from the instruments of torture.

Neither should a child ever be subjected to any violent motion or concussion, such as seizing him by the arm, holding him out at arm's length, and shaking him,—the whole weight of the body being suspended by a single ligament, and the strain upon that being greatly increased by the jerking. Most of us have experienced the shock which even a slight fall may give to the system. When, in descending a flight of steps, we mistakingly suppose we have reached the bottom, and so step forward upon the air, instead of the floor, the jar to the whole body is always uncomfortable and sometimes serious; but how much more

severe must be the effect upon the feebly-knitted frame of a child, when a strong man seizes him, and jerks him forwards and backwards, as a coachman cracks a whip; then dashes him upon the floor feet foremost, shortening his dimensions, as one shuts up a telescope; and coils him and uncoils him, and crimps him and stretches him smooth again! I have seen a man seize two boys, at a time, in school, for some joint misdemeanor, and, holding them by the back of the coat-collar, make them "*chasseé*" right and left, then "*forward and back two*," and, at last, bring them together with a terrific "*dos-a-dos*," until his own strength, or the tailor's stitching gave way; and do it all with as much zest as though it were an exercise in gymnastics.

Corporal punishment should be with a rod, rather than with a ferule, and below the loins or upon the legs, rather than upon the body or hand.

In regard to the extent or severity of punishment, it is obvious that it must be a reality, and not a sham. If the lightning never struck, nobody would be afraid of the thunder. Yet the opposite extreme is to be sedulously guarded against. In all schools that are rightly governed, it is the mortification of being punished, quite as much as the bodily smart or tingling, which causes it to be deprecated, and gives it efficacy. If the common standard or average of punishment is fixed low, whatever exceeds that amount, will be equally as formidable as though the average were higher. Besides, if the penalty for moderate offences be very severe, what shall be done in aggravated cases? Where stealing a shilling is punishable with death, and murder with nothing more, it is, virtually, offering a premium on murder. The most disorderly school I ever saw, was one where the teacher carried a ratan in his

hand, all the time; and even while the company was present, there was scarcely any thing done, except giving a practical synopsis of the verb *to whip*. A universality of whipping defeats itself. Where all share the same odious fortune, disgrace attaches to none. Like the inhabitants of Botany Bay, all being rogues, nobody loses caste. Shame never belongs to multitudes. It is the separation of one or a few from all others, and affixing a stigma upon them, that begets shame.

In graduating the amount of punishment, we should regard the motive from which the offence proceeded, and not the consequences which may have been produced by it. In the government of children, people are prone to look at the outward, external consequences of the wrongful act, and to apportion the punishment according to the mischief done;—for a small mischief punishing lightly, for a serious one, severely. This is a false criterion. An act merely careless may set a house on fire; and again, an attempt to burn a house may fail, through the merest accident, and do no injury. The true rule, in meting out punishment, is, to disregard the external consequences, to look to the intention and motive from which the offence emanated, and to apportion the penalty to the wickedness of the intent, whether it took effect or failed. It is the condition of the mind that is to be regarded. If that is wrong, all is wrong; if that is right, it is of comparatively little consequence what outward effects may have followed. Teach children, that to die is but a small calamity; to be depraved, a great one.

One word more as to the extent or amount of punishment. Severe punishments are usually incurred by the violent outbreak of some passion or propensity. A child has a quarrelsome disposition, and beats a schoolmate; or he has been accustomed to place all pleasure in the indulgence

of appetite, and steals fruit or cakes; or he wishes to conceal a fault, and lies. In these cases, he acts under the impulse of an appetite or propensity, and these impulses are all blind. They act instinctively. Remove the temptation, in these cases,—that is, let the desired object be attainable without the commission of the offence,—and the offence would not be committed. The offence is not committed for its own sake, but for the sake of the gratification or immunity to be purchased by it. Now, I have no doubt, that when the temptation is not present, the reason and conscience of most children tell them plainly enough that the indulgence is wrong. When the passions are asleep, reason and conscience affirm their own authority, declare their own rights, and place themselves in an attitude of defence. But, by and by, the insurgent passion returns and demands its gratification; and when reason and conscience place themselves in its path, it rides them down, as heavy-armed cavalry ride over unarmed peasantry. In these cases, reason and conscience are the antagonists of passion; but they are not a match for it, and are trodden down by it. Here, if all other means fail, punishment, that is, the fear of punishment, may be lawfully called in, as an ally to duty, so that the child's first thought shall be this:—However much I desire such or such a pleasure, I must incur so much pain by obtaining it, that, on the whole, it is not worth what it will cost. Such is the case in ten thousand minds, whether of children or of men,—Fear fighting Desire;—and here the fear,—that is, the amount of punishment exciting the fear,—should be strong enough, with such aid as reason and conscience may contribute, to vanquish the desire. This affords a rule for the measure of punishment. All beyond this, is wantonness or vindictiveness, and not to be tolerated. To

illustrate what I mean, by an anecdote: Just as a certain school was closing, one afternoon, a boy named John, who had become almost crazy with impatience, and in whom the steam of discontent had risen almost to the exploding point, *whistled* outright. "John," said the teacher, "was it you who whistled?" "No, sir," says John. "Henry," says the teacher, "didn't John whistle?" "Yes, sir," says Henry. "John," says the teacher, "how dare you say you did not whistle?" "I didn't," says John, "*it whistled itself.*" Now, in this case, if John were to be punished at all, he should only be punished so much that it would not whistle itself, the next time.

As to the question, under what circumstances punishment should be inflicted, I think, in the first place, it should, in ordinary cases, be private,—at recess, or in another apartment, or after the close of the school. Punishment is often braved by audacious natures, and its effect lost upon them by its publicity. They wish to sustain, or to win a reputation for hardiness and indomitableness of spirit, and hence they will bear any punishment, if publicly inflicted, without shrinking or flinching; —just as an Indian sings when he is tortured, or as some steel-fibred malefactors walk unconcernedly up the gallows' ladder, as though they were going up stairs to bed. So far as the effect upon other pupils is concerned, it is obvious that their imaginations will be likely to exaggerate an unknown punishment beyond the reality, unless, indeed, it be terribly severe. Under actual inspection, punishment would have its limits of suffering; but imagination has no limits.

Punishment should never be inflicted without deep solemnity of manner. The teacher should exhibit every indication that he suffers more pain in giving, than its object does in receiving it. Because grown persons are out of the way of

punishment, they are prone to think of it lightly, to speak of it lightly, and to inflict it lightly. But it is a solemn dispensation, and should be treated with corresponding solemnity. I believe a finely-tempered child suffers as much, by being kept from his playmates after school, to be punished, as a high-spirited man would suffer, in being taken to prison from family and friends. How obvious then it is, that punishment should never be inflicted in a passion,—unless, indeed, it be a passion of tears. Angry feelings in a teacher beget angry feelings in a pupil, and if these are repeated, day after day, they will at last rise to obstinacy, to obduracy and incorrigibleness. No man can conceive the difference which must be produced in the future character and happiness of children, and eventually, upon the future character and happiness of the whole community, if, on the one hand, the early years of life are filled with dissocial, morose and revengeful feelings, or, on the other, with sentiments of tenderness and affection. I will not cite the case of barbarous tribes, because they are an extreme; but whence did the old Romans derive their inexorableness and impenetrability of heart? They rose to the highest state of ancient civilization, and yet their national employment was war; their national resources were plunder, and their national glory consisted in unrighteous victories, won over unoffending nations. Under such influences, their hearts became more impenetrable than the iron mail that covered them. In their religion, Mars received ten times more homage than Jupiter. They prayed and sacrificed to the latter, just enough to retain his good will, but the former was the god of their affections. This intense destructiveness in the national character, was cultivated by their exhibitions of fighting wild beasts, and their gladiatorial contests. One of

these spectacles lasted more than four months; eleven thousand animals of different kinds were killed, and ten thousand gladiators fought. Think of a people who could give the appellation of "*Games*" to these blood-reeking abominations. Every person who manifests cruelty or anger before the young, does all he can to fashion their unformed tempers into this revolting and unchristian shape.

Is not the British nation celebrated, the world over, for the aggressive spirit of its policy, and, with many beautiful exceptions, for the unamiable character of its people; and is it not in the schools of Great Britain that punishments are more frequent and more severe than in any other part of Christendom? I know it is said that this severity in the discipline of children is accompanied by great hardihood of spirit and by distinguished martial bravery in men. Look into British factories and British mines, and see by what else it is accompanied!

Punishment should not be inflicted in haste, nor summarily. It should bear every mark of consideration, and of being administered from the moral compulsion of duty. Its effects pervade the whole moral nature of a child. By its application, the disease may not be cured, but only driven in, to break out with increased violence at another time, or in another place. The times when a punished child is dismissed or sent back to his seat, are among the most decisive epochs in his moral history. Often, they are turning points in the journey of life, where, for good or for evil, he leaves one path and enters upon another; and though, at first, their divergency may be slight, yet their terminations may be as far asunder as the upper from the nether world. Hence the necessity of learning the condition of his feelings at those times, in order to rectify whatever may be

wrong in them. I confess that I have been amazed and overwhelmed, to see a teacher spend an hour at the black-board, explaining arithmetical questions, and another hour on the reading or grammar lessons; and, in the mean time, as though it were only some interlude, seize a boy by the collar, drag him to the floor, castigate him, and remand him to his seat,—the whole process not occupying two minutes. Such laborious processes for the intellect, such summary dealings with the heart;—with that part of us, where all motives reside, whence all actions proceed, and which shall grow in loftiness, until we become in moral stature, taller than archangels, or arch-fiends! But, says the teacher, in defence of his *extempore* inflictions, I have no time for your homilies and moralizings. I should come short of my daily round of tasks; I must skip or clip my recitations, did I spend time to inquire whether the child thought himself wronged or justly dealt by; whether he would look backward upon the occasion with repentance, or forward with revenge; whether conscience were alive or dead in his breast. But, for man's sake and for Heaven's sake, let me ask, what was time made for, if not for these moral uses?—To what holier purpose can time be appropriated, than, when a child gets lost in error, to set his face towards the right point of the moral compass before he is started off again. The glass of time contains no sands more sacred than those which run during these precious moments. When I look back to the playmates of my childhood; when I remember the acquaintance which I formed with nine college classes; when I cast my eye over the circles of men with whom professional and public duties made me conversant; I find amongst all these examples, that, for one man who has been ruined for want of intellect or attainment, hundreds have perished

for want of morals. And yet, with this disproportion between the causes of human ruin, we go on, bestowing at least a hundred times more care and pains and cost in the education of the intellect, than in the cultivation of the moral sentiments, and in the establishment of moral principles. From year to year, we pursue the same course of navigation, with all these treasure-laden vessels going down to destruction around us and before us, when, if the ocean in which they are sunk, were not fathomless and bottomless, the wrecks, ere this, would have filled it solid to the surface.

Let me adjure teachers to reconsider this whole subject; to apportion anew the appeals to the physical and to the moral nature of children; and, if the practice anywhere still exists of punishing by sections or platoons, without inquiry and without counsel, to abolish it, instantaneously and forever.

A child may surrender to fear, without surrendering to principle. But it is the surrender to principle only which has any permanent value. The surrender of a child to fear, is like a surrender of our purse to a highwayman, whom, that very instant, we would shoot if we could. Hence, after the outward demonstrations of the inward evil have been repressed, let not teacher or parent think that his labor is done. It is only begun. In a moral sense, the child is still a valetudinarian. Often, the very process which quells the rage of the disease, weakens the constitution of the patient, and special pains become so much the more necessary to reëstablish health. Let the cordial of love and consolation be administered to the wounded spirit. This is often the most delicate, always the most important part of the process. I had almost said, better die of the disease than to expel it by remedies, which, proving

fatal to the constitution, entail a daily torture upon all subsequent life. The external manifestation,—the overt acts,—of a passion, may be stifled, while the passion itself lives on, and broods over its viper-offspring in the silent breast. Instead of a solemn resolve against further indulgence, it may be nursing its strength in secrecy for a postponed gratification. It may have withdrawn from outward view, but be lying in ambush, and watching the hour when it can securely leap upon its victim. Now, no fury of external outbreak is so much to be dreaded and deprecated, as these silent machinations, or foretastes of revenge. It is, therefore, no paradox to say, that order and silence and regularity may be maintained, in a school, by a course of discipline, which, while it seems to make a good school, shall, in reality, be a skilfully arranged process for making bad men. The feelings, with which the child leaves the bar and the tribunal,—the course which is given to his future feelings by the execution of the sentence;—this, as it regards the moral welfare of the child, is the whole;—all else is as nothing, compared with it. His moral nature has been fused in the fires of shame and pain, and the question is, in what shapes, of good or of evil, it shall harden as it cools. Every body is familiar with the story of Dr. Bowditch, who came near to being inhumanly punished for an alleged falsehood, because he said he had solved an arithmetical question, whose solution required more talent than his tyrannical master supposed him to possess. Late in life, that great man spoke of the event in a manner which showed that, after the lapse of half a century, the feeling of righteous indignation towards the teacher, was still vivid in his breast. How often do we meet men, who never speak of some former teacher of theirs, without a contraction of the whole mus-

cular system;—without such involuntary motions as would indicate that they were crushing a viper in their hands, and had the head of a serpent under their heel! Punishment inflicted by such teachers, may have prevented whispering in school, but at the expense of a thousand muttered curses afterwards. Those whose art it is to color cloths, have a time and a process for what they call *setting the color*. The hour of punishment is the time, when, perhaps more than at any other time, the complexion of the moral character *is set;* —and oh! how often it is dyed to that hue of immitigable blackness, which can neither be purged nor washed away by the refiner's fire or the fuller's soap!

If angry feelings survive punishment, they can rarely be concealed from a discerning eye. They will be betrayed by the looks, and, especially, by the tones of the voice. The child will not have the same freedom, or ease of manner, as before, nor the same zest for accustomed pleasures. His eye will droop, or turn away, when it meets that of the teacher, or else it will be fixed upon him, with a look of defiance. Perhaps he will be even more punctilious in the discharge of duties, as one of the concealments for the revenge he is nourishing within. But that subtlest organ, the voice, will be the great index. Any of these indications should admonish the teacher that the realm within is not yet wholly at peace, and that it needs another visitation from the spirit of duty to calm its troubled elements. And well may the teacher afford to spend time and strength for such an object; for, if he can effect a thorough reformation, by a change of view or by the inspiration of a new purpose, it will probably be a reformation, once for all,—a repentance not to be repented of.

In the management of children, we often aggravate the obstinacy and incorrigibleness we

lament, by perpetually rebuking and punishing a bad tendency, instead of expending the same amount of time and means for inspiring the proper countervailing motives. The relative strength of any one faculty is as certainly reduced by increasing the strength of its antagonist faculties, as by reducing its own. Remove by introducing. Nourish the good plant, until it overshadows the bad one, and intercepts its sunshine and absorbs its nutriment. One of the most efficient means of that revolution which has lately taken place, in the cure of the insane, consists in the substitution of new trains of thoughts and feelings, until the former ones die out. While the old physicians strove to expel the currents of insane thought and emotion, by scourgings, and drownings, and confinements in dungeons, they tried and tortured in vain. They only aggravated the maladies they were appointed to heal. But from the day that they began to open new sources of thought and feeling in the minds of their patients,—from that day, a power to cast out the evil spirits of insanity was given them. So, in the training of a child, it is possible to supplant vicious images and vicious desires, by substituting virtuous images and virtuous desires; but it is not possible to create a void by merely removing the vicious ones.

Another rule is to be observed in administering all rebukes and all punishments. Always connect the rebuke or the punishment with the wrong that incurs it, and not with the correlative right. Keep the idea of the offence before the child's mind, as the cause of his suffering. If you correct a boy for not coming to school half an hour earlier, he wishes the school was in the Red Sea, because, by the law of mental association, the punishment is involuntarily connected with the school. But correct him for truancy, in stopping to play at marbles, and the next time he is tempted

to stop and play, the very sight of the marbles, by the law of association, will make his skin itch and tingle. If a boy is convicted of falsehood, and the teacher, as he lays on the smart, says, "I'll teach you how to speak the truth," the boy will hate the very idea of truth, for the bad company it comes in. But if the teacher, in administering the penalty, explains that falsehood and punishment are Siamese twins, and must go together, then, when falsehood comes smiling and blandishing along to tempt its victim again, he will see the terrific form of pain standing by its side. Thus the association of pain should always be connected with the wrong done, and never with the duty omitted. It thus becomes unconsciously an auxiliary for the right. So, on the other hand, the rewards of virtue should be always associated with the virtuous conduct, as though the former grew naturally from the latter. Every person, at all conversant with the forum or the senate, knows that one of the great secrets of an orator's power consists in his skilful management of the involuntary associations. If this is an efficient instrument in swaying the minds of men, how much more so in controlling children!

I cannot close these remarks, without saying a word upon the general duty of parents, whose children are punished at school. That duty is to espouse the side of the teacher, to vindicate his conduct, and, especially, to abstain from all complaint against him in any place where it may come to the child's ear. They should have an interview with the child himself on the subject; they should explain the nature of the misconduct that incurred the punishment, and they should show him that they, the parents, suffer shame and mortification, on his account, sharper than any pain of chastisement can be. They should strive to close any breach of alienation between pupil and teacher,

which the punishment may have caused. If the parent has reason to suppose that the punishment was too severe, or that the mode or spirit of inflicting it was improper, let him seek a private interview with the teacher, frankly state his apprehensions, and then, like an honest and impartial man, hearken to the defence that may be made. The punishment of children at school furnishes the very occasions when that love of offspring, which Heaven, for the wisest purposes, has planted in every parental breast, is liable to become injurious and excessive; and when, therefore, it most needs the control of reason. Only in cases made flagrant by their excess, or their frequency, should the conduct of the teacher receive *public* animadversion.

I knew a family, in which there were five children, who received almost all the education they ever had, in the district school of an obscure country town. It was the father's custom, during the first week of the winter's school, to invite the master to dine with him; and when the whole family were gathered around the table, to make the importance of the school, the necessity of good order and obedience in it, with other kindred topics, the subject of conversation; and then, in the presence of the children, to say, as it were incidentally, that he trusted they would all behave well; that they knew no desire was so near his heart as their welfare; but that, if they justly incurred any punishment at school, he should repeat it at home, because he should consider an offence committed in school as an offence against himself, as well as against the teacher. One of the sons,—a boy of such high, sanguineous temperament that his feelings were subject to a sort of spontaneous combustion,—one day drew down punishment upon himself for a practical joke,—which, if the wit of it had been an atonement,

instead of an aggravation, would have been expiated in the commission;—and the fact being known at home, by the very solemnity of the children's looks, the father inquired into the circumstances, and, finding the punishment to have been well merited, that very night, he laid upon the boy's back, what the learned would call a *fac simile*, or *duplicate original* of the stripes; and there ended the chapter of school punishments, in that family, forever. Not another child, ever afterwards, got sting or tingle, at school; and this, happening in the old-fashioned times, when the mischievous system of emulation bore sway, the children of that family, year after year, swept away all the prizes, and nobody ever thought of asking who were at the heads of the classes.

I would conclude with this summary of what has been said:—that, in the present state of society, and with our present inexperienced and untrained corps of teachers, punishment, and even corporal punishment, cannot be dispensed with, by all teachers, in all schools, and with regard to all scholars; that, where a school is well conducted, the minimum of punishment shows the maximum of qualifications; that the office of punishment is solely to restrain transgressors, until other and higher motives can be brought to bear upon them, and, therefore, that the great and paramount duty of the teacher, in all cases, is to regard, as all-essential, the state of mind into which a child is brought by the punishment, and in which he is left after it,—the current of thought and feeling introduced being in every respect as important as that which is turned away; that, as the object of school is to prepare for the duties of after-life, it follows that the school is made for the world, and not the world for the school; and hence, however much any course may seem to promote the present good

appearance or intellectual advancement of the school, yet, if it tends to defeat the welfare of the future men and women, now composing the school, its adoption is shortsighted and suicidal; and finally, that punishment of no kind is ever inflicted in the right spirit, or is likely to be inflicted in the right measure, or with the right results, unless it is as painful to him who imposes as to him who receives it. Let these truths be regarded, and Christian teachers and parents, in the few cases in which they will be called upon to administer pain, will do it with the noble feelings that animated the pagan executioner, who gave, as he was commanded, the cup of poison to Socrates, but wept as he gave it.

"Oh, woe to those who trample on the mind,
That deathless thing! They know not what they do,
Nor what they deal with. Man, perchance, may bind
The flower his step hath bruised; or light anew
The torch he quenches; or to music wind
Again the lyre-string from his touch that flew;—
But for the soul, oh, tremble, and beware
To lay rude hands upon God's mysteries there!"

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